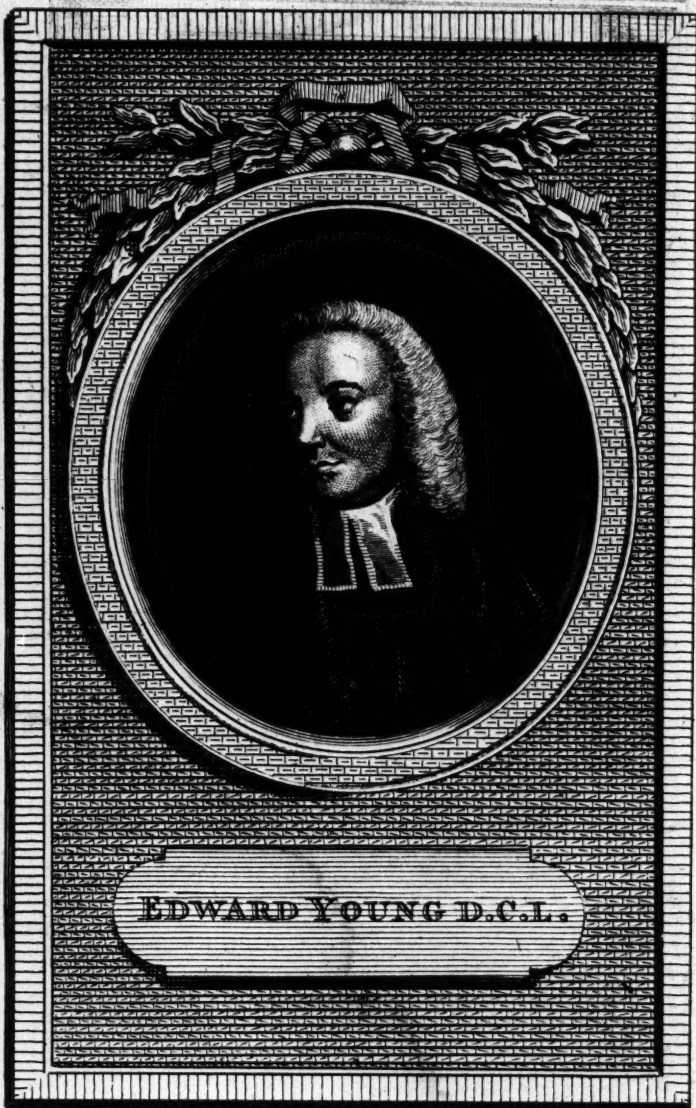




Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange, Strand London, Oct. 10th 1777. Good Copy!

Alcman del.
Printed



Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange, Strand London, Oct. 10th 1777. Good Copy!

Alcman del.
Printed

BELL'S EDITION,
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN,
COMPLETE FROM
CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.



YOUNG VOLUME I.
Such is Earth's melancholy map, but far
More faithful this earth is a true map of Man.

Epigram 1

Monnier del.

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange Strand London Oct^r 10th 1777.



THE *Gal 11 D L*
POETICAL WORKS
OF THE REVEREND
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.
IN FOUR VOLUMES.
WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

When flatter'd crimes of a licentious age
Reproach our silence, and demand our rage;
When purchas'd follies, from each distant land,
Like arts, improve in Britain's skilful hand;
When the Law shews her teeth, but dares not bite,
And South-sea treasures are not brought to light;
When Churchmen Scripture for the Classics quit,
Polite apostates from God's grace to wit;
When men grow great from their revenue spent,
And fly from bailiffs into parliament;
When dying sinners, to blot out their score,
Bequeath the Church the learning of a whore;
To chafe our spleen, when themes like these increase,
Shall panegyric reign, and censure cease?—
Shall authors smile on such illustrious days,
And satirize with nothing—but their praise?

SAT. I.

VOL. I.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1777.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF THE REVEREND
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

When harvest's voice of a harvest is
 Proclaim our harvest, and demand our wage;
 When purchase's bell tolls from each distant land,
 Like ours, improve in Britain's distant hand;
 When the law leaves her seat, but dates not die;
 And count the treasure, but dates not die;
 When Christman's Scripture is the only date;
 Before the throne of God, the only date;
 When men grow great, the only date;
 And the poor fall into the only date;
 When the King's House, the only date;
 Dedicate the Church, the only date;
 To state our place, when dates like their harvest;
 Shall harvest's reign, and cease to cease;
 Shall harvest's date on each illustrious date;
 And include with nothing--but their date!

VOL. I.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Office of the Author, AT THE MARTIN.

1777.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF THE REVEREND
DR. EDWARD YOUNG,
VOL. I.
CONTAINING HIS
COMPLAINT;
OR,
NIGHT-THOUGHTS
ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

Sunt lacrymae rerum, et mentem mortalalia tangunt. VIRG.

Thro' many a field of mortal and divine
The Muse has stray'd, and much of sorrow seen—
O'er friends deceas'd full heartily she wept;
Of love divine the wonders she display'd;
Provd Man immortal; shew'd the source of joy;
The grand tribunal rais'd; assign'd the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,
The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch,
Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke,
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.

NIGHT IX.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1777.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF THE REVEREND
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.
VOL. I.

CONTAINING HIS
COMPLAINT,
OR,
NIGHT-THOUGHTS
ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

BRITISH
MUSEUM

Printed by J. B. Nichols, at the Edinburgh Press, in the Strand, near the Theatre Royal, in the City of London.

There's many a kind of man that lives
The Mole has been his name, and how he lives
O'er friends he does not care to write;
Of love he thinks the worst, and of his wife
Provides him immortality; there's the source of joy;
The grand reward of life; and the reward of love;
Of human life. In fact, to close the whole,
The moral state has fallen out a little;
The poet in fact, not with a Raphael look;
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travel and of hope,
For peace on earth, or progress of the times.

NIGHT IN

EDINBURGH:
AT THE GYLLIE PRESS, BY THE MARRING.
1777.

There is no remark more true, and none more trite, than that the lives of poets, of philosophers, of men of study, indeed, in general, seldom furnish materials for the pen of Biography, by any means so striking in themselves, or so interesting to the multitude of readers, as the lives of warriors, of statesmen, and such other characters as have been eminently distinguished in scenes of public activity and national enterprize. Of the literati, few ever mixed less, upon the whole, with what is termed *the world*, than the reverend and truly immortal Author of the *Night-Thoughts*; a circumstance in no ways to be regretted, however, when we reflect to what noble, to what god-like purposes he devoted all the solitary hours of a life lengthened to a period far beyond what man is commonly destined to enjoy.

This illustrious favourite of the Muses, and ornament of the present century, was the son of the Rev. Mr. Edward Young, a learned and pious divine of the Church of England, of whom there are still extant two volumes of sermons, which able judges have not scrupled to pronounce among the most valuable in our language.

The year in which our Poet was born seems not to be positively known, but in all probability it must have been in or about the 1679. Alike animated to excel

in virtue and to shine in literature, from the example and tuition of the best of fathers, he was, at an early age, matriculated into All-Soul's College, in Oxford, where, in the view of following the Civil law, he actually took a degree in that profession.

In 1704, whilst in this situation, he produced his celebrated poem on the Last Day, which, as being the pious, as well as masterly composition of a young obscure layman, became presently a popular and generally-admired performance.

Soon after this he wrote the poem entitled, The Force of Religion: or, Vanquish'd Love; which was likewise received with very flattering marks of distinction. To the noble family for whose amusement it was originally intended, this poem proved a most acceptable present; and indeed such was the success of both these juvenile performances, at a period when the noblest effusions of genius were daily issuing from the press—when, in fact, the literature of England seemed to have reached the zenith of its glory, that several of the first characters in the kingdom not only loaded him with applause, but actually courted his confidence and friendship.

Ever strongly inclined to the Church, from the natural bias of a mind formed for contemplation, our Author went into orders, and soon after we find him in possession of the Rectory of Wellwyn in Hertfordshire, worth about 500*l.* per annum, and in the honourable list of King's Chaplains.

Though still careſſed by the great, and apparently in the full blaze of court favour, it was yet the fortune of Dr. Young to obtain no higher clerical diſtinction. It muſt be allowed, indeed, that during that reign the arts of poetry, or of real eloquence, were but little promoted or encouraged from the throne: and indeed our Author could expect no great honours or emoluments from a maſter who hated poetry, and ſigmatized all poets with the odious appellation of *buffoons*. Nevertheless, this diſappointment he would not probably have experienced, had the Prince of Wales, by whom he was honoured with particular marks of regard, ſurvived a little longer, or at leaſt had he not been at ſuch open variance with his royal father, and ſo avowed an enemy to all the then favourite meaſures of the court. With the demife of his Royal Highneſs, all the Doctor's hopes of advancement in the church vaniſhed, and even the deſire of opulence ſeemed to forſake him: for in his Night-Thoughts, mentioning himſelf, he obſerves that there was

.....one in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought even wealth might come a day too late.

Notwithſtanding, upon the death of Dr. Hales, he was taken into the ſervice of the Princeſs Dowager of Wales, and ſucceeded as her Privy Chaplain.

At an advanced period of life he married the Lady Eliſabeth Lee, daughter of the late Earl of Litchfield, and the widowed mother of two amiable chil-

dren, a son and a daughter, who both died young, and within a short time of each other. This melancholy interruption to his domestic happiness was almost immediately followed by the death of his wife, an aggravation of his sorrows which, in the poem quoted above, he thus bitterly bewails in an apostrophe to Death, one of the most animated of the kind perhaps in our language.

Infatiate Archer! could not one suffice?

Thy shaft flew thrice, and thine my place was slain;

And thrice, ere thrice you' moon renew'd her horn.

Of all our Author's poetical performances, the Satires, entitled *Love of Fame*, *The Universal Passion*, have been generally considered as the most correct and finished, though written at an early period of life. By certain fastidious critics they have been stigmatized as a mere string of epigrams, which, however diversified, have still the same object in view, and, consequently, cannot fail to tire the reader before he has got through one half of them. We are, however, of opinion, that if simplicity of subject, elegance of style, and brilliancy of wit, be the grand desiderata in such compositions, the Satires of Dr. Young ensure applause; and that when even the great Dean Swift sarcastically observed of them, "that the Poet should" "have been either more angry or more merry," he rather characterised his own disposition than the intrinsic merit of the poems, which, as the Author ob-

serves in the preface, "have been favourably received at home and abroad."

In 1719 our Author made his first appearance in the train of Melpomene; and though *Busiris*, his first effort in the line of tragedy, afforded but little pleasure in the representation, and is indeed frequently tinctured with the false sublime, yet, coolly examined in the closet, a reader of taste will discover in it a number of admirable lines, of elevated sentiments.

His next, and confessedly the best of his tragic compositions, (since it still continues a stock play at the theatres) was *The Revenge*. For the idea of this play, which appears from the *Annals of the Drama* to have been acted in the same year with *Busiris*, our Poet is evidently indebted partly to the *Othello* of Shakespeare, and partly to the *Abdalazar* of Mrs. Behn; on both which pieces he has indeed made many skillful improvements. But the writer of Dr. Young's life, prefixed to the fifth volume of his works, London edit. 1773, probably goes too great a length when he says, "We may assign this piece, with great justice, a place in the first rank of our dramatic writings; and were we to point out to foreigners a tragedy as a proof of English genius, after two or three others, perhaps this might be considered as a proper specimen."

His last, and, according to the general voice, his least perfect tragedy, was *The Brothers*, a play writ-

ten upon the plan of a French piece of great merit; and though it brought but little addition to his fame as a Poet, did yet reflect much additional lustre on his character as a Man, the emoluments arising from its exhibition having been generously allotted by the Author to the purposes of public charity.

Having followed Dr. Young through his dramatic career, let us now consider him as the moral and plaintive, the pious but gloomy, Author of *The Night-Thoughts*; a work composed in a style so strictly peculiar to himself, that of the many efforts which have been made to imitate it, none have proved in any degree successful. Than *The Night-Thoughts* never was any poem received with applause more general or unbounded. "The unhappy bard, whose grief
"in melting numbers flows, and melancholy joys
"diffuse around," has been sung by the profane as well as the pious. These, as already observed, were written under the recent, the overwhelming pressure of sorrow for the death of his wife, and of his daughter and son-in-law; the former of whom, though distinguished by no name, he often pathetically alludes to, while the two latter he beautifully characterises under the poetical appellations of *Nargissa* and *Philander*.

This sublime performance is addressed to Lorenzo, an infidel man of pleasure and dissipation; in a word, a mere man of the world. By Lorenzo, if general report says true, we are to understand his own son,

who, borne away by the passions too often fatal to youth, is well known to have long laboured under the heavy punishment of a father's just displeasure. Whatever there may be in this, (and indeed it is, of little moment to the public) every page of the poem abounds with the noblest flights of fancy—flights which, especially in his description of Death, in the act of noting down, from his secret stand, the exercises of a Bacchanalian society; in his epitaph on the departed World; in the issuing of Satan from his dungeon on the day of judgment, and a few others, might tempt a reader of warm imagination to suppose the poet der the immediate inspiration of the Divinity.

Uniformly a friend to virtue, and an indefatigable assertor of the dignity of human nature against all the cavils, not of the rude multitude only, but of many well-disposed, though mistaken and discontented moralists, in 1754, under the patronage of Queen Caroline, our Author published his *Estimate of Human Life*; a valuable tract, which, while it exhibits a striking picture of the writer's pious benevolence and charity, evinces him to have been alike qualified to shine in prose and verse.—Of this piece, according to his own account of it, the grand scope is to remove a prevalent opinion, highly reflective on Providence, "That this world is, in its own nature, (in other words, by God's appointment) a world of misery; and that to be in it is to be wretched unavoidably."

○ In *The Centaur not Fabulous*, another of his prose pieces, our Author combats, with arguments the most persuasive, clothed in language the most powerful, not only the prevailing vices of his own times, but the vices which, in the nature of things, always will prevail, till Sensuality shall have lost her sway, and Virtue and Reason shall have established their empire in the human breast.

When turned of eighty, our Author published (in the form of a letter addressed to his friend, the celebrated editor of *Sir Charles Grandison*) his *Conjectures on Original Composition*; a performance which (it is more than conjecture to add) will for ever remain a singular monument, that even at that age of general imbecillity and dotage, the intellectual powers of Dr. Young had apparently lost nothing of their wonted vigour.—“ When we consider it as the work of a
 “ man turned of eighty, (says the writer of Young’s
 “ life, *Biographical Dictionary*, vol. 12th,) we are
 “ not to be surprised so much that it has faults, as
 “ how it should come to have beauties. It is indeed
 “ strange that the load of fourscore years was not
 “ able to keep down that vigorous fancy, which here
 “ bursts the bounds of judgment, and breaks the slavish shackles of age and experience.”

But, alas! the publication of this piece proved to be little more than as the sudden blaze of a taper ready to expire in its socket; and happy had it been for

the poetical fame of its Author, had his subsequent and final production, entitled *Resignation*, been condemned to the flames. In justice to that fame, however, it is proper to observe that this poem would never have appeared, but for the indiscreet conduct of a few mistaken friends, who, having read it with pleasure in manuscript, thought no injury could accrue to the Author by clandestinely publishing sundry imperfect extracts from it in the papers.

But this failure in old age could no way diminish the fame he had been earning by a life of more than sixty years of excellence. As a Poet, he was still considered as the only Palladium of ancient genius we had left; and, as a Christian, one of the finest examples of primeval piety. Of a turn of mind naturally grave, though unimpaired with moroseness, our Author, when at home in the country, commonly passed a considerable portion of the day in walking among the tombs in his own churchyard. In his conversation, his writings, and even in his horticultural improvements, there was generally some reference, more or less latent, to the future life of man*. Of the latter circumstance he

* The altar-piece in the church of Wellwyn is the most curious in this or any other kingdom, being adorned with an elegant piece of needle work wrought by the Doctor's wife. In the middle is inscribed, in capital letters, the following sentence, *I am the bread of life*. On the north side of the chancel is the following inscription, supposed to be placed there by the order of Dr. Young, *Virginibus*; "Increase in Nature and in wisdom." And on the south side, *Puerisque*; "and in favour with God and man."

gave a striking proof, in an alcove with a bench, a little way from his house, so painted, that at a distance it passed, with an unsuspecting gazer, for a real one. On advancing more closely to it the illusion was perceived, and, as a motto, appeared the words, *Invisibilia non decipiunt*; "The things unseen deceive us not." Yet, so far was he from gloominess of temper, he was fond of innocent sports and amusements; and not only instituted an assembly and bowling-green in the parish of which he was Rector, but frequently promoted the gaiety of the company in person.

Endowed with an uncommon wit, never was that wit more successfully pointed than against those who testified any contempt for decency or religion. His extempore epigram on M. de Voltaire, who happened, in our Author's presence, to throw out a few idle sneers at Milton, and the allegorical personages of Sin and Death, is well known. Young thus addressed him;

Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin;

You seem a Milton, with his Death and Sin.

Of his sensibility we may likewise judge from an anecdote recorded of him in his clerical capacity. One Sunday, when preaching officially at St. James's, finding every effort to command the attention of his polite auditory ineffectual, pity for their infatuation got the better of decorum, and, seating himself back in the pulpit, he burst into a flood of tears.

Towards the close of his life, sensible of his still-in-

creasing infirmities, he suffered himself to be in a kind of pupillage; for he considered that at a certain time of life the second childhood of age demanded its wonted protection. His son, whose juvenile follies were long obnoxious to parental severity, was at last forgiven, and, a few legacies excepted, succeeded, by will, to the whole of his father's fortune. This great and good man, (having previously ordered all his papers to be burned) after having performed all that man could do to fill his post with dignity, regreted by all, full of years, and loaded with honours, breathed his last on the 3th of April 1765.

Those who know how much our Author comprised in a small compass, and who recollect that he never employed his pen but on subjects of importance, with such the irreparable loss of his manuscripts will be ever regreted; more especially when it is considered that he was the particular friend of Addison, whom he occasionally assisted in the Spectator, and, excepting the late Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, was the only surviving genius of that incomparable group of authors who rendered the reign of Queen Anne illustrious in the annals of literature.

VERSES TO THE AUTHOR.

Now let the Atheist tremble; thou alone
 Canst bid his conscious heart the Godhead own.
 Whom shalt thou not reform? O thou, hast seen
 How God descends to judge the souls of men.
 Thou heardst the sentence how the guilty mourn,
 Driv'n out from God, and never to return.

Yet more, behold ten thousand thunders fall,
 And sudden vengeance wrap the flaming ball,
 When Nature sunk, when every bolt was hurl'd,
 Thou saw'st the boundless ruins of the world.

When guilty Sodom felt the burning rain,
 And sulphur fell on the devoted plain,
 The Patriarch thus, the fiery tempest past;
 With pious horror view'd the desert waste;
 The restless smoke still wav'd its curls around,
 For ever rising from the glowing ground.

But tell me, oh! what heav'nly pleasure, tell,
 To think so greatly, and describe so well!
 How wast thou pleas'd the wondrous theme to try,
 And find the thought of man could rise so high?
 Beyond this world the labour to pursue,
 And open all eternity to view?

But thou art best delighted to rehearse
 Heav'n's holy dictates in exalted verse.

O thou hast power the harden'd heart to warm, 25
To grieve; to raise, to terrify, to charm;
To fix the soul on God; to teach the mind
To know the dignity of human-kind;
By stricter rules well-govern'd life to scan,
And practise o'er the angel in the man 30

Magd. Col.

Oxon.

T. WARTON.

TO A LADY, WITH THE LAST DAY.

MADAM,

HERE sacred truths, in lofty numbers told,
The prospect of a future state unfold;
The realms of night to mortal view display,
And the glad regions of eternal day:
This daring Author scorns, by vulgar ways
Of guilty wit, to merit worthless praise.
Full of her glorious theme, his tow'ring Muse,
With gen'rous zeal, a nobler fame pursues:
Religion's cause her ravish'd heart inspires,
And with a thousand bright ideas fires;
To Transports her quick, impatient, piercing eye,
O'er the strait limits of mortality
To boundless orbs, and bids her fearless soar,
Where only Milton gain'd renown before;
Where various scenes alternately excite
Amazement, pity, terror, and delight. 15

Thus did the Moses sing in early times,
Ere skill'd to flatter vice, and varnish crimes:
Their lyres were tun'd to virtuous songs alone,
And the chaste poet and the priest were one:
But now, forgetful of their infant state,
They sooth the wanton pleasures of the great;
And from the press, and the licentious stage,
With luscious poison taint the thoughtless age:
Deceitful charms attract our wond'ring eyes, 25
And specious ruin unsuspected lies.

So the rich soil of India's blooming shores,
Adorn'd with lavish Nature's choicest stores,
Where serpents lurk, by flow'rs conceal'd from sight,
Hides fatal danger under gay delight. 30

These purer thoughts from gross alloys refin'd,
With heav'nly raptures elevate the mind:
Not fram'd to raise a giddy, short-liv'd joy,
Whose false allurements, while they please, destroy;
But bliss resembling that of saints above, 35
Sprung from the vision of th' Almighty Love:
Firm, solid bliss, for ever great and new,
The more 'tis known, the more admir'd, like you;
Like you, fair Nymph! in whom united meet
Endearing sweetness, unaffected wit, 40
And all the glories of your sparkling race,
While inward virtues heighten ev'ry grace.
By these secur'd, you will with pleasure read
Of future judgment, and the rising dead;

Of time's grand period, heav'n and earth o'erthrown;
 And gasping Nature's last tremendous groan. 40
 These, when the stars and sun shall be no more,
 Shall beauty to your ravag'd form restore:
 Then shall you shine with an immortal ray,
 Improv'd by death, and brighten'd by decay. 50

Pemb. Col.
 Oxon.

T. TRISTRAM.

TO THE AUTHOR.

On his Last Day, and Universal Passion.

AND must it be as thou hast sung,
 Celestial Bard, seraphic Young!
 Will there no trace, no point be found
 Of all this spacious glorious round?
 Yon' lamps of light must they decay? 5
 On Nature's self Destruction prey?
 Then fame, the most immortal thing
 Ev'n thou canst hope, is on the wing.
 Shall Newton's system be admir'd
 When time and motion are expir'd? 10
 Shall souls be curious to explore
 Who rul'd an orb that is no more?
 Or shall they quote the pictur'd age,
 From Pope's and thy corrective page,
 When vice and virtue lose their name 15
 In deathless joy or endless shame?

While wears away the grand machine,
 The works of genius shall be seen:
 Beyond, what laurels can there be
 For Homer, Horace, Pope, or thee? 20
 Thro' life we chase, with fond pursuit,
 What mocks our hope, like Sodom's fruit;
 And, sure, thy plan was well design'd
 To cure this madness of the mind;
 First beyond time our thoughts to raise, 25
 Then lash our love of transient praise;
 In both we own thy doctrine just,
 And fame's a breath, and men are dust. 28

1736.

BANKS.

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 An

THE COMPLAINT.

PREFACE.

As the occasion of this Poem was real, not fictitious, so the method pursued in it was rather imposed, by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed; which will appear very probable from the nature of it; for it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is, from long narrations to draw short maxims: here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.

NIGHT I.

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

Humbly inscribed to the

RIGHT HON. ARTHUR ONSLOW, ESQ.

Speaker of the House of Commons.

THE Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsully'd with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose,
 I wake: how happy they who wake no more!
 Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
 I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
 Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding thought
 From wave to wave of fancy'd misery
 At random drove, her helm of reason lost;
 Tho' now restor'd, 'tis only change of pain,
 (A bitter change!) severer for severe:
 The day too short for my distress; and night,
 Ev'n in the zenith of her dark domain,
 Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.
 Night, sable goddess! from her ebony throne,
 In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
 Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world;
 Silence how dead! and darkness how profound!
 Nor eye nor list'ning ear an object finds;
 Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the gen'ral pulse
 Of life stood still, and nature made a pause;
 An awful pause! prophetic of her end.
 And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd:
 Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

Silence and Darkness! solemn sisters! twins
 From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought
 To reason, and on reason build resolve,
 (That column of true majesty in man)
 Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;
 The grave your kingdom: there this frame shall fall.

A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.
But what are ye?—

Thou, who didst put to flight
Primeval Silence; when the morning stars,
Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;
O Thou! whose word from solid darkness struck
That spark, the sun, strike wisdom from my soul;
My soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Thro' this opaque of nature and of soul,
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind,
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe)
Lead it thro' various scenes of life and death,
And from each scene the noblest truths inspire.
Nor less inspire my conduct than my song;
Teach my best reason reason; my best will
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve.
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrears:
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

The bell strikes one. We take no note of time,
But from its loss: to give it then a tongue
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
It is the knell of my departed hours.
Where are they? With the years beyond the flood.
It is the signal that demands dispatch:

How much is to be done! My hopes and fears
 Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge
 Look down—on what! A fathomless abyss.
 A dread eternity! how surely mine!
 And can eternity belong to me,
 Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour?
 How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
 How complicate, how wonderful, is man!
 How passing wonder He who made him such!
 Who cent'red in our make such strange extremes
 From different natures marvellously mix'd,
 Connexion exquisite of distant worlds!
 Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain!
 Midway from nothing to the Deity!
 A beam ethereal, fully'd and absorb'd!
 Tho' fully'd and dishonour'd, still divine!
 Dim miniature of greatness absolute!
 An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!
 Helpless immortal! insect infinite!
 A worm! a god!—I tremble at myself,
 And in myself am lost. At home a stranger,
 Thought wanders up and down surpris'd, aghast,
 And wond'ring at her own. How reason reels?
 O what a miracle to man is man!
 Triumphantlly distress'd! what joy! what dread!
 Alternately transported and alarm'd!
 What can preserve my life! or what destroy!
 An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave;

Legions of angels can't confine me there: 90

'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof: 91

While o'er my limbs Sleep's soft dominion spread, 92

What tho' my soul fantastic measures trod 93

O'er fairy fields, or moor'd along the gloom 94

Of pathless woods, or down the raggy steep 95

Hurl'd headlong, swam with gain the mantled pool, 96

Or scal'd the cliff, or danc'd on hollow winds: 97

With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain: 98

Her ceaseless flight, tho' devious, speaks her nature 99

Of subtler essence than the trodden clod; 100

Active, aerial, towering, unconfin'd, 101

Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall, 102

Ev'n silent night proclaims my soul immortal; 103

Ev'n silent night proclaims eternal day. 104

For human weal Heav'n husbands all events: 105

Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain: 106

Why then their loss deplore that are not lost? 107

Why wanders wretched Thought their tombs around 108

In infidel distress? Are angels there? 109

Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, ethereal fire? 110

They live! they greatly live a life on earth 111

Unkindled, unconceiv'd, and from an eye 112

Of tenderness let heav'nly pity fall 113

On me, more justly number'd with the dead, 114

This is the desert, this the solitude: 115

How populous, how vital is the grave! 116

This is Creation's melancholy vault, 117

The vale funereal, the sad cypress glooms;
 The land of apparitions, empty shades!
 All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond
 Is substance; the reverse is Folly's creed.
 How solid all, where change shall be no more?

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
 The twilight of our day, the vestibule,
 Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death,
 Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,
 This gross impediment of clay remove,
 And make us, embryos of existence, free.
 From real life but little more remote
 Is he, not yet a candidate for light,
 The future embryo, stumbling in his fire.
 Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,
 Yon' ambient azure shell, and spring to life,
 The life of gods, O transport! and of man.

Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thoughts,
 Inters celestial hopes without one sigh.
 Pris'ner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,
 Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by Heav'n
 To fly at infinite, and reach it there,
 Where seraphs gather immortality,
 On Life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God,
 What golden joys ambrosial clust'ring glow
 In his full beam, and ripen for the just,
 Where momentary ages are no more!
 Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire!

And is it in the flight of threescore years
 To push eternity from human thought;
 And smother souls immortal in the dust?
 A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
 Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
 Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,
 At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
 Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
 To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure? It o'erwhelms myself:
 How was my heart incrosted by the world!
 O how self-fetter'd was my growling soul!
 How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round
 In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,
 Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er,
 With soft conceit of endless comfort here,
 Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

Night-visions may befriend (as sung above :)
 Our waking dreams are fatal: How I dream'd,
 Of things impossible! (could sleep do more?)
 Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!
 Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave!
 Eternal sunshine in the storms of life!
 How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
 With gorgeous tapestries of pictur'd joys!
 Joy behind joy, in endless perspective!
 Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
 Calls daily for his millions at a meal,

Starting I woke, and found myself undone.
 Where now my frenky's pompous furniture?
 The cobwebb'd cottage, with its ragged wall
 Of mould'ring mud, is royalty to me!
 The spider's most attenuated thread
 Is cord, is rable, to man's tender tie
 On earthly bliss: it breaks at every breeze.
 O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!
 Full above measure: lasting beyond bound!
 A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.
 Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
 That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
 And quite unparadise the realms of light,
 Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres,
 The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
 Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
 Here teems wild revolutions every hour,
 And rarely for the better: or the best
 More mortal than the common births of Fate.
 Each moment has its sickle, emulous
 Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
 Strikes empires from the root: each moment plays
 His little weapon in the narrower sphere
 Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down
 The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.
 Bliss! sublunary bliss! — proud words, and vain!
 Implicit treason to divine decree!
 A bold invasion of the rights of Heav'n!

I clasp'd the phantoms, and I fond them air.
 O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,
 What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!

Death! great proprietor of all 'tis thine
 To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
 The sun himself by thy permission shines,
 And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere:
 Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
 Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?
 Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?
 Insatiate Archer! could not one suffice?

Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;
 And thrice, ere thrice yon' moon had fill'd her horn.
 O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament
 Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?
 How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile,
 Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,
 Self-given, solar, ray of sound delight.

In ev'ry vary'd posture, place, and hour,
 How widow'd ev'ry thought of ev'ry joy!
 Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!
 Thro' the dark postern of time long elaps'd,
 Led softly, by the stillness of the night,
 Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)
 Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;
 In quest of wretchedness perversely strays,
 And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts

Of my departed joys, a num'rous train;
 I rue the riches of my former fate;
 Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament;
 I tremble at the blessings once so dear,
 And ev'ry pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why complain? or why complain for one? 235
 Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,
 The single man? are angels all beside?
 I mourn for millions; 'tis the common lot:
 In this shape or in that has Fate entall'd
 The mother's throes on all of woman born, 240
 Not more the children than sure heirs of pain.

War, famine, pest, volcano, storm, and fire,
 Intestine broils, Oppression, with her heart,
 Wrapt up in triple brass, beseege mankind,
 God's image, disinherited of day, 245
 Here plung'd in mines, forgets a sun was made:

There beings, deathless as their haughty lord,
 Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life,
 And plow the winter's wave, and reap despair.

Some for hard masters, broken under arms, 250
 In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,
 Beg bitter bread thro' realms their valour sav'd,
 If so the tyrant or his minion doom.

Want, and incurable disease, (fell pair!)
 On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize 255
 At once, and make a refuge of the grave.
 How groaning hospitals eject their dead!

What numbers groan for sad admission there!
 What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,
 Solicit the cold hand of Charity!
 To shock us more, solicit it in vain!
 Ye silken sons of Pleasure! since in pains
 You rue more goddish visits, visit here,
 And breathe from your debauch; give, and reduce
 Surfeit's dominion o'er you. But so great
 Your impudence, you blush at what is right.
 Happy! did sorrow seize on such alone!
 Not prudence can defend, or virtue save.
 Disease invades the chastest temperance,
 And punishment the guiltless; and alarm
 Thro' thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.
 Man's caution often into danger turns,
 And, his guard falling, crushes him to death.
 Not Happiness itself makes good her name;
 Our very wishes give us not our wish.
 How distant oft' the thing we dote on most
 From that for which we dote, felicity?
 The smoothest course of Nature has its pains,
 And truest friends, thro' error, wound our rest.
 Without misfortune what calamities!
 And what hostilities without a foe!
 Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth.
 But endless is the list of human ills,
 And sighs might sooner fail than cause to sigh.
 A part how small of the terraqueous globe

Is tenanted by man? the rest a waste,
 Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands!
 Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death?
 Such is earth's melancholy map! but, far
 More sad! this earth is a true map of man: 295
 So bounded are its haughty lord's delights
 To woe's wide empire, where deep troubles toss,
 Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,
 Rav'nous calamities our vitals seize,
 And threat'ning Fate wide opens to devour. 305

What then am I, who sorrow for myself?
 In age, in infancy, from others' aid
 Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind:
 That Nature's first, last, lesson to mankind.
 The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels. 310
 More gen'rous sorrow, while it sinks exalts,
 And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.
 Nor virtue more than prudence bids me give
 Swoln thought a second channel: who divide,
 They weaken, too, the torrent of their grief. 315
 Take, then, O World! thy much-indebted tear.
 How sad a sight is human happiness
 To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!
 O thou! whate'er thou art, whose heart exalts,
 Wouldst thou I should congratulate thy fate! 320
 I know thou wouldst; thy pride demands it from me!
 Let thy pride pardon what thy nature needs,
 The salutary censure of a friend.

Thou happy wretch! by blindness thou art blest;
 By dotage daddled to perpetual smiles;
 Know, Smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;
 Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain;
 Misfortune, like a creditor severe,
 But rises in demand for her delay;
 She makes a scourge of past prosperity,
 To sting thee more, and double thy distress.
 Fortune makes her court to thee;
 Thy fond heart dances while the Syren sings;
 Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;
 I would not damp, but to secure thy joys;
 Think not that fear is sacred to the storm;
 Stand on thy guard against the smiles of Fate;
 Is Heaven's transiency in its frowns! most sure;
 And in its favours formidable too!
 Its favours here are trials, not rewards;
 A call to duty, not discharge from care,
 And should alarm us full as much as woes,
 Awake us to their cause and consequence;
 And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert;
 Awe Nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,
 Lest while we clasp we kill them; nays, invert
 To worse than simple misery their charms;
 Revolted joys, like foes in Civil war,
 Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd;
 With rage envenom'd rise against our peace;
 Beware what earth calls happiness; beware

All joys but joys that never can expire.
Who builds on less than an immortal base,
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine dy'd with thee, Philander! thy last sigh 343
Dissolv'd the charm; the disenchanted earth
Lost all her lustre: Where her glittering towers?
Her golden mountains where? all darken'd down
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears:
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece
Of outcast earth, in darkness! what a change
From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd
Thy glowing cheek! ambition truly great,
Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle seed within,
(Sly, treach'rous miner!) working in the dark,
Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd
The worm to riot on that rose so red,
Unfaded ere it fell, one moment's prey!

Man's foresight is conditionally wise. 360
Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns,
Oft' the first instant its idea fair
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye!
The present moment terminates our sight;
Clouds; thick as those on Doom-day, drown the next:
We penetrate, we prophesy in vain.
Time is dealt out by particles; and each
Are mingled with the streaming sands of life.
By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn

Deep silence, "where eternity begins." 370

By Nature's law, what may be may be now;
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?

Where is to-morrow? In another world. 375

For numbers this is certain; the reverse

Is sure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,

This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,

As on a rock of adamant we build

Our mountain-hopes, spin out eternal schemes; 380

As we the Fatal Sisters could outspin,

And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not ev'n Philander had bespoke his shroud;

Nor had he cause; a warning was deny'd.

How many fall as sudden, not as safe? 385

As sudden, tho' for years admonish'd home?

Of human ills the last extreme beware;

Beware, Lorenzo! a slow-sudden death.

How dreadful that deliberate surprise!

Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer: 390

Next day the fatal precedent will plead;

Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.

Procrastination is the thief of time;

Year after year it steals, till all are fled,

And to the mercies of a moment leaves 395

The vast concerns of an eternal scene.

If not so frequent, would not this be strange?

That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears

The palm, "That all men are about to live,"

For ever on the brink of being born.

All pay themselves the compliment to think

They one day shall not die, and their pride

On this reversion takes up ready praise;

At least their own; their future selves applaud.

How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!

Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails;

That lodg'd in Fate's to wisdom they consign;

The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone.

'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool,

And scarce in human wisdom to do more.

All promise is poor dilatory man,

And that thro' ev'ry stage. When young, indeed,

In full content we sometimes nobly rest,

Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish,

As dutious sons, our fathers were more wise.

At thirty man suspects himself a fool;

Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;

At fifty chides his infamous delay,

Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;

In all the magnanimity of thought

Resolves, and re-resolves; then dies the same.

And why? because he thinks himself immortal.

All men think all men mortal but themselves;

Themselves, when some alarming shock of Fate

Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the sudden dread:
 But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
 Soon close; where past the shaft no trace is found.
 As from the wing no scar the sky retains,
 The parted wave no furrow from the keel,
 So dies in human hearts the thought of death:
 Ev'n with the tender tear which Nature sheds
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
 Can I forget Philander? that were strange!
 O my full heart!—But should I give it vent, 435
 The longest night, tho' longer far, would fail,
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.
 The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn.
 Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
 I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer 440
 The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,
 And call the stars to listen: every star
 Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.
 Yet be not vain; there are who thine excel,
 And charm thro' distant ages. Wrapt in shade, 445
 Pris'ner of darkness! to the silent hours
 How often I repeat their rage divine,
 To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe!
 I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.
 Dark, tho' not blind, like thee, Mæonides! 450
 Or, Milton! thee; ah, could I reach your strain!
 Or his who made Mæonides our own.
 Man, too, he sung: immortal man I sing:

Oft' bursts my song beyond the bounds of life: 1455
 What, now, but immortality can please
 O had he press'd his theme, pursu'd the track
 Which opens out of darkness into day!
 O had he mounted on his wing of fire,
 Soar'd where I sink, and sung immortal man,
 How had it blest mankind, and rescu'd me! 1460

End of Night First.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT II.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP.

Humbly inscribed to the

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WILMINGTON.

"WHEN the rock crew he wept,"—smote by that
 Which looks on me, on all; that pow'r who bids [eye
 This midnight centinel, with clarion shrill,
 Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,
 Rouse souls from slumber into thoughts of Heaven;
 Shall I too weep? where then is fortitude?
 And fortitude abandon'd, where is man?
 I know the terms on which he sees the light;
 He that is born is list'd: life is war,
 Eternal war with woes: who bears it best,
 Deserves it least.—On other themes I'll dwell.
 Lorenzo! let me turn my thoughts on thee;
 And thine; on themes may profit; profit there
 Where most thy need. Themes, too, the genuine growth
 Of dear Philander's dust: He thus, tho' dead,
 May still befriend.—What themes? Time's wondrous
 Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene. [prices.

So could I touch these themes as might obtain
 Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengag'd,
 The good deed would delight me; half-impress'd 20
 On my dark cloud an iris, and from grief
 Call glory.—Dost thou mourn Philander's fate?
 I know thou say'st it: says thy life the same?
 He mourns the dead who lives as they desire.
 Where is that thirst, that avarice of time, 25
 (O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,
 As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?
 O Time! than gold more sacred; more a load
 Than lead to fools, and fools reputed wise.
 What moment granted man without account? 30
 What years are squander'd, wisdom's debt unpaid?
 Our wealth in days all due to that discharge
 Haste, haste, he lies in wait; he's at the door;
 Insidious Death! should his strong hand arrest,
 No composition lets the pris'ner free. 35
 Eternity's inexorable chain; he that is born is tied;
 Fast binds, and vengeance claims the full arrears.

How late I shudder'd on the brink! how late
 Life call'd for her last refuge in despair!
 That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe; 40
 Vain would I pay thee with eternity,
 But ill my genius answers my desire.
 My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.
 Accept the will;—that dies not with my strain.
 For what calls thy disease, Lorenzo? not 45

For Esculapian; but for moral aid,
 Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.
 Youth is not rich in time; it may be, 'twill
 Part with it as with money, sparing; pay
 No moment, but in purchase of its worth;
 And what its worth ask deathbeds, they can tell.
 Part with it as with life; redemption big
 With holy hope of nobler time to come;
 Time higher aim'd, still nearer the great mark
 Of men and angels; virtue more divine.

Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?
 (These Heav'n benign in vital union bind)
 And sport we like the natives of the bough,
 When vernal suns inspire, Amusement stings
 Man's great demands to trifles to live;
 And is it then a trifle, too, to die?
 Thou say'st, I preach; Lorenzo's his confession
 What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?
 Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?
 Is it not treason to the soul immortal,
 Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?
 Will toys amuse, when medicines cannot cure?
 When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes
 Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,
 As lands, and cities with their glittering spires,
 To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm
 Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there;
 Will toys amuse? No; thrones will then be toys.

And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.
 Redeem we time:—its loss we dearly buy:
 What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports?
 He pleads time's numerous blanks; he loudly pleads
 The straw-like trifles on life's common stream
 From whom those blanks and trifles but from thee?
 No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant;
 Virtue, or purpos'd virtue, still be thine;
 'This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves
 In act no trifle, and no blank in time.
 This greater fills, immortalizes all;
 This the best art of turning all to gold;
 This the good heart's prerogative to raise
 A royal tribute from the poorest hours;
 Immense revenue every moment pays.
 If nothing more than purpose in thy power,
 Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed.
 Who does the best his circumstance allows
 Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.
 Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint:
 'Tis not in things or thought to domineer.
 Guard well thy thoughts: our thoughts are heard in
 One all-important time, thro' ev'ry age;
 Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd, the man
 Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour
 "I've lost a day,"—the prince who nobly cry'd,
 Had been an emperor without his crown
 Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race:

He spoke as if deputed by mankind to blow
 So should all speak: so reason speaks in all;
 From the soft whispers of that God in man,
 Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,
 For rescue from the blessings we possess
 Time, the supreme: Time is eternity
 Pregnant with all eternity can give him
 Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile,
 Who murders Time, he crushes in the birth
 A pow'r ethereal, only not ador'd.
 Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself
 Is thoughtless; thankless; inconsistent man
 Like children babbling nonsense in their sleep
 We censure Nature for a span too short
 That span too short we deem as tedious too
 To last the ling'ring moments into speed,
 And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves
 Art, brainless Art! our furious charioteer
 (For Nature's voice unlist'ned would recall)
 Drives headlong towards the precipice of death;
 Death most our dread; death thus more dreadful made.
 O what a riddle of absurdity!
 Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot-wheels
 How heavily we drag the load of life!
 Blest leisure is our curse; like that of Cain
 It makes us wander, wander earth around
 To fly that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groan'd

The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour: 130
 We cry for mercy to the next amusement;
 The next amusement mortgages our fields;
 Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,
 From hateful time if prisons set us free.
 Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief, 135
 We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,
 Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd
 To man's false optics (from his folly false)
 Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
 And seems to creep, decrepit with his age, 140
 Behold him when past by; what then is seen
 But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?
 And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
 Rueful, aghast, cry out on his career. 145
 Leave to thy foes these errors and these ills;
 To Nature just, their cause and cure explore.
 Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expense;
 Nor niggard Nature; men are prodigals.
 We waste, not use our time; we breathe, not live.
 Time wasted is existence, us'd is life; 150
 And bare existence man, to live ordain'd,
 Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight.
 And why? since time was giv'n for use, not waste,
 Enjoin'd to fly, with tempest, tide, and stars,
 To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man. 155
 Time's use was doom'd a pleasure, waste a pain,
 That man might feel his error if unseen,

And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure;
 Not, blund'ring, split on idleness for ease.
 Life's cares are comforts; such by Heav'n design'd;
 He that has none must make them, or be wretched.
 Cares are employments, and without employ
 The soul is on a rack, the rack of rest,
 To souls most adverse, action all their joy.

Here then the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds;
 Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool;
 We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan;
 We thwart the Deity, and 'tis decreed,
 Who thwart his will shall contradict their own.
 Hence our unnatural quarrel with ourselves;
 Our thoughts at enmity; our bosoms broils;
 We push Time from us, and we with him back;
 Lavish of lustrums; and yet fond of life;
 Life we think long and short; death seek and shun;
 Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,
 United jar, and yet are loath to part.
 Oh the dark days of vanity! while here
 How tasteless! and how terrible when gone!
 Gone? they ne'er go; when past they haunt us still;
 The spirit walks of ev'ry day decreas'd,
 And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
 Nor death nor life delight us. If time pass
 And time possess both pain us, what can please
 That which the Deity to please ordain'd,
 Time us'd! The man who consecrates his hours

By vig'rous effort and an honest aim,
At once he draws the sting of life and death;
He walks with Nature, and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause and cure are seen & see next
Time's nature, origin, importance, speed,
And thy great gain from urging his career;
All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,
He looks on time as nothing. Nothing else
Is truly man's; 'tis Fortune's, Time's a god;
Hast thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence
For, or against, what wonders can he do
And will's to stand blank nether he disdain
Not on those terms was Time (Heav'n's stranger!) sent
On his important embassy to man
Lorenzo now, on the long-destin'd hour,
From everlasting ages growing ripe,
That memorable hour of wondrous birth,
When the Dread-Sire, on emanation bent,
And big with Nature, rising in his might,
Call'd forth creation (for then Time was born)
By Godhead streaming thro' a thousand worlds;
Not on those terms, from the great days of heav'n,
From old Eternity's mysterious orb
Was Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies;
The skies, which watch him in his new abode,
Measuring his motions by revolving spheres,
That horologe machinery divine
Hours, days, and months, and years, his children, play

Like num'rous wings, around him, as he flies;
 Or rather, as unequal plumes, they shape
 His ample pinions, swift at darted flame,
 To gain his goal; to reach his ancient rest,
 And join anew Eternity his fire,
 In his immutability to rest,
 When worlds, that count his circles now, unking'd,
 (Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush
 To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy? why with levities
 New-wing thy short short day's too rapid flight?
 Know'st thou or what thou dost, or what is done?
 Man flies from time, and time from man: too soon,
 In sad divorce, this double flight must end;
 And then where are we? where, Lorenzo! then,
 Thy sports, thy pomps? I grant thee in a state
 Not unambitious; in the ruffled shroud,
 Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath
 Has Death his sopperies? then well may Life
 Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well-array'd! ye Lilies of our land!
 Ye Lilies Male! who neither toil nor spin,
 (As sister lilies might) if not so wise
 As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!
 Ye Delicate! who nothing can support,
 Yourselves most insupportable! for whom
 The winter rose must blow, the sun put on
 A brighter beam in Leo; silky-soft

Favonius! breathe still softer, or be chid;
 And other worlds send odours, fauce, and song,
 And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!
 O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem
 One moment unamused a misery
 Not made for feeble man! who call aloud
 For ev'ry bawble drivell'd o'er by sense;
 For rattles and conceits of ev'ry cast;
 For change of follies and relays of joy,
 To drag your patient thro' the tedious length
 Of a short winter's day——say, Sages! say,
 Wit's Oracles! say, Dreamers of gay dreams!
 How will you weather an eternal night,
 Where such expedients fail?

O treach'rous Conscience! while she seems to sleep
 On rose and myrtle, lull'd with Syren song;
 While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
 On headlong Appetite the slacken'd rein,
 And give us up to license, unrecall'd,
 Unmark'd;—see, from behind her secret stand,
 The sly informer minutes ev'ry fault;
 And her dread diary with horror fills.
 Not the gross act alone employs her pen;
 She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band,
 A watchful foe! the formidable spy
 List'ning, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,
 Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
 And steals our embryos of iniquity.

As all rapacious usurers conceal
 Their Doom-day-book from all confirming heirs,
 Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats
 Us spendthrifts of inestimable time,
 Unnoted notes each moment misapply'd;
 In leaves more durable than leaves of brass
 Writes our whole history, which Death shall read
 In ev'ry pale delinquent's private ear,
 And judgment publish; publish to more worlds
 Than this, and endless age in groans resound.
 Lorenzo! such that sleeper in thy breast;
 Such is her slumber, and her vengeance such
 For slighted counsel; such thy future peace;
 And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon?

But why on time so lavish is my song?
 On this great theme kind Nature keeps a school
 To teach her sons herself. Each night we die;
 Each morn'g are born anew: each day a life!
 And shall we kill each day? If trifling kills,
 Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain
 Cry out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd
 Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.
 Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heav'n invites,
 Hell threatens: all exerts; in effort all,
 More than creation, labours! Labours more
 And is there in creation what, amidst
 This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,
 And ardent energy, supinely yawns?—

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Man sleeps, and man alone; and man, whose fate,
 Fate irrevocable, entire, extreme,
 Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf 300
 A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom
 All else is an alarm; man, the sole cause
 Of this surrounding storm! and yet he sleeps, and
 As the storm rock'd to rest, — Throw years away?
 Throw empires, and be blameless. Moments seize, 305
 Heav'n's on their wing! a moment we may wish,
 When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day stand still,
 Bid him drive back his car, and reimport
 The period past, regive the given hour.
 Lorenzo! more than miracles we want. 310
 Lorenzo — O for yesterdays to come!

Such is the language of the man awake,
 His ardour such for what oppresses thee:
 And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo? No;
 That more than miracle the gods indulge
 To-day is yesterday return'd; return'd
 Full-pow'r'd to cancel, explate, raise, adorn,
 And restate us on the rock of peace.
 Let it not share its predecessor's fate,
 Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool:
 Shall it evaporate in fume, fly off
 Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?
 Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd
 More wretched for the clemencies of Heav'n?

Where shall I find him? Angels! tell me where: 315
 You know him: he is near you; point him out.

Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,
 Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?
 Your golden wings, now hovering o'er him, shed
 Protection; now are waving in applause
 To that blest son of foresight! Lord of fate,
 That awful independent oh to-morrow!
 Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;
 Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile,
 Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly;
 That common but opprobrious lot! Past hours
 If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,
 If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,
 All feeling of futurity benumb'd,
 All godlike passion for eternals quenched;
 All relish of realities expired;
 Repulsed all correspondence with the skies;
 Our freedom chain'd; quite wingle our desire;
 In sordid dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;
 Prone to the centre, crawling in the dust,
 Dismounted every great and glorious aim;
 Imbuted every faculty divine;
 Heart-bury'd in the rubbish of the world;
 The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,
 Souls, elevates, angelic, wing'd with fire,
 To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
 On thrones, which shall not adorn their masters
 Tho' we from earth, ethereal that that fall, shang'd
 Such veneration due; O man; to man!

Who venerate themselves the world despise. 1353
 For what, gay Friend! is this esculcheon'd world, 10
 Which hangs our death in one eternal night? 10
 A night that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
 And wraps our thought at banquets in the shroud. 10
 Life's little stage is a small eminence, 360
 Inch high the grave above, that home of man,
 Where dwells the multitude we gaze around;
 We read their monuments, we sigh, and while
 We sigh we sink; and are what we deplore.
 Lamenting or lamented all our lot.

Is Death at distance? No; he has been on thee;
 And giv'n sure earnest of his final blow.
 These hours, which lately smil'd, where are they now?
 Pallid to thought, and ghastly, drown'd, all drown'd.
 In that great deep which nothing dissemblages
 And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.
 The rest are on the wings; how fleet their flight!
 Already has the fatal train took fire;
 A moment, and the world's blown up to thee.
 The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past Hours,
 And ask them what report they bore to Heaven;
 And how they might have borne more welcome news.
 Their answers form what men Experience call;
 If Wisdom's friend her best, if not, worst, tell.
 O reconcile them! kind Experience cries,
 "There's nothing here but what as nothing weighs;

" The more our joy, the more we know it vain, O "
 " And by success are tutor'd to despair.
 Nor is it only this, but must be so again,
 Who knows not this, tho' gray, & full of years,
 Loose thro' from earth the grasp of fond desire,
 Weigh anchor, and some happier shore explore.
 Art thou so mov'd thou can'st not disengage
 Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes?
 Since by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,
 Light as the summer's dust, we take in air
 A moment's giddy sight, and fall again
 Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,
 And sleep, till Earth herself shall be a mole
 Since then (as empires, their small world o'erthrown)
 We, fore-amaz'd, from out earth's ruins stand,
 And rise to fate extreme of soul or fate,
 As man's own choice (controller of his fate)
 As man's despotic will, perhaps, on his
 (O how omnipotent is time!) decrees,
 Should not each warning give a strong alarm?
 Warning, far less than that of bosom torn
 From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead!
 Should not each dial strike us as we pass,
 Portentous, as the written wall which struck,
 O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,
 Ere-while high-bush'd with insolence and wine,
 Like that, the dial speaks, and points to thee,
 Lorenzo! loath to break thy banquet up

" O Man ! thy kingdom is departing from thee ; "

" And while it lasts is emptier than my shade . "

Its silent language dull ; nor need'st thou call

Thy Maid to decipher what it means on a word or W

Know, like the Median, Fate is in thy wall ; 415

Dost also know whence ? Belshazzar-like, some d

Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death ;

Life feeds the murderer : ingrate, he thrives

On her own meal, and then his parts devour ;

But here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies ; 420

That solar shadow, as it measures life,

It life resembles too : Life speeds away

From point to point, tho' seeming to stand still ;

The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth ;

Too subtle is the movement to be felt ; 425

Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.

Warnings point out our danger, good men's time

As these are useless when the sun is set ;

So those, but when more glorious Reason shines .

Reason should judge in all ; in Reason's eye 430

That sedentary shadow travels hard ;

But such our gravitation to the wrong,

So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,

'Tis later with the wife than he's aware .

A Withington goes slower than the sun ; 435

And all mankind mistake their time of day ;

Ev'n age itself . Fresh hopes are hourly sown

In furrow'd brows . So gentle life's descent,

'Tis converse qualifies for solitude;
 As exercise for solitary rest;
 By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves;
 And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone.

Wisdom, tho' richer than Peruvian mines;
 And sweeter than the sweetest ambrosial hive;
 What is she but the means of happiness;
 That unobtain'd, than Polly mote a fool;
 A melancholy food; without her belly;
 Friend ship, the means of wisdom; wisely gives
 The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise;
 Nature; in zeal for human amity;
 Denies or disparts an undivided joy;
 Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;
 Joy flies monopolists. It calls for two;
 Rich fruit; here it's planted; never pluck'd by one;
 Needful auxiliars are our friends; to give
 To social man true relish of himself.
 Fall on ourselves descending in a line;
 Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight;
 Delight intends to take on by rebound;
 Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial Happiness! where'er she stoops
 To visit earth; one thing the goddess finds;
 And one alone, to make her sight amends;
 For absent heav'n's at the bottom of our friendship;
 Where heart meets heart; reciprocally lost;
 Each other's pillow to repose divine.

Beware the counterfeit; in passion's flame
 Hearts melt, but melt like ice, soon harder frozen:
 True love strikes root in reason, passion's foe:
 Virtue alone extends us for life:
 I wrong her much—extends us for ever.
 Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair
 Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,
 And emulously rapid in her race.
 O the soft enmity!—endearing strife!
 This carries Friendship to her noon-tide point,
 And gives the river of eternity
 From friendship, which outlives my former themes,
 Glorious survivor of old Time and Death!
 From friendship, thus, that flow'r of heav'nly seed,
 The wise extract earth's most Hyblean bliss,
 Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy
 But for whom blossoms this Elysian flower?
 Abroad they find who cherish it at home.
 Lorenzo! pardon what my love extorts,
 An honest love, and not afraid to frown.
 Tho' choice of follies fasten on the great,
 None clings more obstinate than sandy fond
 That sacred friendship is their easy prey,
 Caught by the vesture of a golden lure,
 Or fascination of a high-born smile.
 Their smiles the great, and the coquette, throw out
 For others' hearts, tenacious of their own;
 And we no less of ours, when such the bait

Ye Fortune's Cofferers! ye Pow'rs of Wealth! 550
 Can gold gain friendship? Impudence of hope! A
 As well mere man an angel might beget. 551
 Love, and love only, is the loan for love. 552
 Lorenzo! pride repress, nor hope to find
 A friend, but what has found a friend in thee. 553
 All like the purchase, few the price will pay, 554
 And this makes friends such miracles below. 555

What if, (since daring on so nice a theme) 556
 I shew thee friendship delicate as dear, 557
 Of tender violations apt to die? 558
 Reserve will wound it, and distrust destroy. 559
 Deliberate on all things with thy friend: 560
 But since friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough, 561
 Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core, 562
 First on thy friend deliberate with thyself; 563
 Pause, ponder, list; not eager in the choice, 564
 Nor jealous of the chosen: fixing fix, 565
 Judge before friendship, then confide till death. 566
 Well for thy friend, but nobler far for thee. 567
 How gallant danger for earth's highest prize! 568
 A friendship worth all hazards we can run, 569
 'Tis poor is the friendless master of a world. 570
 "A world in purchase for a friend is gain." 571

So sung he, (angels hear that angel-sung!) 572
 Angels from friendship gather half their joy. 573
 So sung Philander, as his friend went round 574
 In the rich ichor, in the generous blood. 575

Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,
 A brow solute, and everlaughing eye;
 He drank long health and virtue to his friend,
 His friend! who warm'd him more, who more inspir'd.
 Friendship's the wine of life; but friendship new
 (Not such was his) is neither strong nor pure.
 O! for the blight complexion, cordial warmth,
 And elevating spirit of a friend,
 For twenty summers ripening by my side,
 All feculence of falsehood long thrown down,
 All social virtues rising in his soul,
 As crystal clear, and smiling as they rise!
 Here nectar flows; it sparkles in our sight;
 Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart;
 High-flavour'd bliss for gods! on earth how rare!
 On earth how lost! Philander is no more.

Think! 'tison the theme intoxicates my song?
 Am I too warm?—Too warm I cannot be!
 I lov'd him much, but now I love him more.
 Like birds, whose beauties I as guile half conceal'd,
 Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
 Expanded, shine with azure, green, and gold;
 How blessings brighten as they take their flight!
 His flight Philander took, his upward flight,
 If ever soul ascended. Had he dropp'd,
 (That eagle genius!) O had he let fall
 One feather as he flew, I then had wrote
 What friends might have said, but prudent feels for them;

Rivals scarce damn, and Zeilns reprove.
 Yet what I can I must: it were profane
 To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
 And cast in shadows his illustrious close.
 Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime, 610
 Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung
 And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd
 Painful of Christian, to the blush of Wit.
 Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,
 The deathbed of the just is yet undrawn 615
 By mortal hands; it merits a divine:
 Angels should paint it; angels ever there,
 There on a post of honour and of joy.

Dare I presume, then? but Philander bids,
 And glory tempts, and inclination calls. 620
 Yet am I struck, as struck the soul beneath
 Aërial groves' impenetrable gloom,
 Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade,
 Or gazing, by pale lamps, on high-born dust
 In vaults, thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings, 625
 Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.
 It is religion to proceed: I pause—
 And enter, aw'd the temple of my theme,
 Is it his deathbed? No; it is his shrine:
 Behold him there just rising to a god. 630
 The chamber where the good man meets his fate
 Is privileg'd beyond the common walk
 Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heav'n.

Fly, ye Profane! if not, draw near with awe,
 Receive the blessing, and adore the chance!
 That threw in this Bethesda your disease:
 If unrestor'd by this despair your cure;
 For here resistless Demonstration dwells,
 A death-bed 's a detector of the heart,
 Here tir'd Dissimulation drops her mask
 Thro' Life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!
 Here real and apparent are the same.
 You see the man, you see his hold on heav'n,
 If sound his virtue, as Philander's sound,
 Heav'n waits not the last moment; owns her friends
 On this side death; and points them out to men;
 A lecture silent, but of sov'reign pow'r!
 To Vice confusion, and to Virtue peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,
 Virtue alone has majesty in death;
 And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns,
 Philander! he severely frown'd on thee
 "No warning giv'n! unceremonious fate!
 "A sudden rush from life's meridian joys!
 "A wrench from all we love! from all we are!
 "A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque
 "Beyond conjecture! feeble Nature's dread!
 "Strong Reason's shudder at the dark unknown!
 "A sun extinguish'd! a just opening grave!
 "And, oh! the last, last, what? (can words express;
 "Thought reach it?) the last—silence of a friend!"

Where are those horrors, that amazement, where no
 This hideous group of ills which singly shock, ⁶⁶⁰
 Demand from man. — I thought him man till now.

Thro' Nature's wreck, thro' vanquish'd agonies, ⁶⁶⁵
 (Like the stars straggling thro' this midnight gloom)
 What gleams of joy? what more than human peace?
 Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm?

No, not in death the mortal to be found.
 His conduct is a legacy for all, ⁶⁷⁰
 Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.
 His comforters he comforts; great in ruin,
 With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields,
 His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene! ⁶⁷⁵
 Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?
 His God sustains him in his final hour,
 His final hour brings glory to his God!
 Man's glory Heav'n vouchsafes to call her own.
 We gaze, we weep; mix'd tears of grief and joy! ⁶⁸⁰
 Amazement strikes! devotion bursts to flame!
 Christians adore! and Infidels believe.

As some tall tow'r, or lofty mountain's brow,
 Detains the sun, illustrious, from its height,
 While rising vapours and descending shades, ⁶⁸⁵
 With damps and darkness drown the spacious vale,
 Undamp't by doubt, undarken'd by despair,
 Philander thus augustly rears his head,
 At that black hour which gen'ral horror sheds

On the low level of the inglorious throng's
 Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy,
 Divinely beam on his exalted soul
 Destruction gild and crown him for the skies
 With incommunicable lustre bright.

End of Night Second

How our hearts burn within us at the scene!
 Whence this brave bound of our limits fix'd to man?
 His God sustains him in his final hour,
 His final hour brings glory to his God,
 Man's glory Heaven's riches to call her own.
 We gaze, we weep, mix'd tears of grief and joy,
 A measure of devotion bursts to flame,
 Christian adore, and in his belief
 As some tall tow' or lofty mountain's brow,
 Detains the sun, illumines, from its height,
 While rising vapours and descending dews,
 With damps and darkness brown the spacious vale,
 Unhappy doubts, unshaken by despair,
 Pindaric thus suggest, tears in his head,
 At that black hour which our fathers shed

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT III.

NARCISSE.

Humbly inscribed

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF P——.

*Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere inanes.**Vierge*

From dreams, where thought in Fancy's maze runs
 To reason, that heav'n-lighted lamp in man, [mad,
 Once more I wake; and at the destin'd hour,
 Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,
 I keep my assignation with my woe.

O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
 Lost to the noble sallies of the soul!
 Who think it solitude to be alone,
 Communion sweet! communion large and high!
 Our reason, guardian angel, and our God!
 Then nearest these, when others most remote;
 And all, ere long, shall be remote but these:
 How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,
 A stranger! unacknowledg'd! unprov'd!
 Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast;
 To win thy wish creation has no more:

Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.—
But friends how mortal dang'rous the desire.

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking Bards!
Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head, 20
And reeling thro' the wilderness of joy,
Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's chain,
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.
My fortune is unlike, unlike my song,
Unlike the deity my song invokes. 25

I to Day's soft-eyed sister pay my court,
(Endymion's rival) and her aid implore,
Now first implor'd in succour to the Muse.

Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's form,
And modestly forego thine own! O thou 30
Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire?
Say, why not Cynthia, patroness of song?
As thou her crescent, like thy character
Assumes, still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits who dare dispute 35
This revolution in the world inspir'd?
Ye train Pierian to the lunar sphere,
In silent hour, address your ardent call
For aid immortal, less her brother's right.
She with the spheres harmonious nightly leads 40
The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,
A strain for gods, deny'd to mortal ear.
Transmit it heard, thou Silver Queen of heav'n!

* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

What title or what name endears thee most;
 Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe!—or dost hear
 With higher gust, fair Banned of the skies?
 Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,
 More pow'ful than of old Circe's charms?
 Come, but from heav'nly banquets with thee bring
 The soul of song, and whisper in mine ear
 The theft divinely or in propitious dreams
 (For dreams are thine) transfuse it thro' the breast
 Of thy first votary—but not thy last;
 If, like thy namesake, thou art ever kind.

And kind thou wilt be; kind on such a theme;
 A theme so like thee; a quite lunar theme;
 Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair!
 A theme that rose all pale; and told my soul
 'Twas night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;
 A night which struck a damp; a deadlier damp,
 Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb.
 Narcissa follows ere his tomb is clos'd.
 Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;
 They love a train; they tread each other's heels;
 Her death invades his mournful sight; and claims
 The grief that started from my lids for him;
 Seizes the faithless; alienated tear;
 Or shares it ere it falls. So frequent Death;
 Sorrow he more than causes; he confounds;
 For human sighs his rival strokes contend,
 And make distress distraction. Oh, Philander!

What was thy fate? a double fate to me;
 Portent and pain! a menace and a blow!
 Like the black raven howling o'er my peace,
 Not less a bird of ominous prey;
 It call'd Naveissa long before her hour;
 It gall'd her tender soul by stroke of bliss;
 From the first blossom, from the buds of joy
 Those few ominous fate upblasted leaves
 In this moment, clote of human life.

Sweet Harmonist! and beautiful as sweet!
 And young as beautiful! and soft as young!
 And gay as soft and innocent as gay!
 And happy (if aught happy here) as good!
 For Fortune fond, had built her nest on high;
 Like birds quite exquisite of note and plum,
 Transfix'd by Fate (who loves a lofty mark)
 How from the summit of the grove she fell,
 And left it unharmonious all its charm
 Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song!
 Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,
 Still stealing there, and with voluptuous pain
 (O to forget her!) thrilling thro' my heart!

Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy! this group
 Of bright ideas, flow'rs of Paradise,
 As yet unferret! in one blaze we bind,
 Kneel, and present it to the skies, as all
 We guess of heav'n; and these were all her own;
 And she was mine; and I was—was!—most blest—

Gay title of the deepest misery;
 As bodies grow more pond'rous robb'd of life,
 Good lost weighs more in grief than gain'd in joy.
 Like blossom'd t'rees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,
 Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;
 And if in death still lovely, lovelier there,
 Far lovelier! pity swells the tide of love,
 And will not the severe excuse a sight?

Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep.
 Our tears indulg'd indeed deserve our shame,
 Ye that e'er lost an angel, pity me!

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
 Dawning a dimmer day on human sight,
 And on her cheek, the residence of Spring,
 Pale Omens sat, and scatter'd fears around
 On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze
 That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,

I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,
 Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
 And bore her nearer to the sun, the sun

(As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam,
 Dely'd his wonted succour; nor with more
 Regret beheld her drooping than the bells
 Of lilies, fairest lilies, not so fair!

Queen Lilies and ye painted Populads
 Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives!
 In morn and evening dew your beauties bathe,
 And drink the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow;

And outblush (mine excepted) every fair;
 You gladlier grew; ambitious of her hand;
 Which often crept your odours, incense meet
 To thought so pure! Ye lovely Fugitives! hold
 Coeval race with man! for man you smile;
 Why not smile at him too? You share, indeed,
 His sudden pass, but not his constant pain.

So man is made thought ministers delight
 But what his glowing passions can engage;
 And glowing passions bent on aught below
 Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale;
 And anguish after rapture, how severe
 Rapture? bold man! what tempts the wrath divine,
 By plucking fruit deny'd to mortal taste,
 While here presuming on the rights of Heaven
 For transport dost thou call on every hour,
 Lorenzo? At thy friend's expense be wise:
 Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
 A broken reed at best; but oft a spear
 On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.
 Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her.—Thought
 Resenting rallies, and wakes every woe
 Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour
 And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, smil'd
 And when high-flavour'd thy fresh-opening joys
 And when blind man pronounc'd thy bliss complete!
 And on a foreign shore, where strangers wept
 Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still,

Strangers to kindness; wept. Their eyes let fall
 No human tears; strange tears that trickled down
 From marble hearts; obdurate tenderness
 A tenderness that call'd them more severe;
 In spite of Nature's soft persuasion (feel'd
 While Nature melted Superstition rav'd;
 That mourn'd the dead; and this deny'd a grave.

Their sighs incens'd; sighs foreign to the will
 Their will the tiger-suck'd outrag'd the storm:
 For, oh! the curs'd ungodliness of Zeal!
 While sinful flesh relented; spirit nurs'd
 In blind Infallibility's embrace,
 The sainted spirit petrify'd the breast,
 Deny'd the charity of dust to spread
 O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.
 What could I do! what succour? what resource?
 With pious sacrilege a grave I stole;
 With impious piety that grave I wrong'd;
 Short in my duty, coward in my grief
 More like her murderer than friend, I crept
 With soft-suspended step, and muffled deep
 In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh
 I whisper'd what should echo thro' their realms;
 Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.
 Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes,
 While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd
 Pardon necessity; blest Shade! of grief
 And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;

Half-execration mingled with my prayer;
 Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd;
 Sore grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust;
 Stamp'd the curs'd foil; and with humanity
 (Deny'd Narcissa) wish'd them all a grave.

Glow's my resentment into guilt: what guilt
 Can equal violations of the dead?
 The dead how sacred! sacred is the dust
 Of this heav'n-labour'd form, erect, divine!
 This heav'n-assum'd, majestic, robe of earth
 He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
 With azure bright, and cloth'd the sun in gold:
 When ev'ry passion sleeps that can offend;
 When strikes us ev'ry motive that can melt;
 When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,
 That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;
 Then! spleen to dust? the dust of innocence?
 An angel's dust!—This Lucifer transcends;
 When he contended for the Patriarch's bones,
 'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride;
 The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

Far less than this is shocking in a race
 Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love,
 And uncreated, but for love divine,
 And but for love divine this moment lost
 By Fate reforc'd, and sunk in endless night.
 Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things
 Most horrid! mid stupendous highly strange!

Yet oft' his courtesies are smooother wrongs;
Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
And contumelious his humanity :
What then his vengeance ? Hear it not, ye Stars ! 215
And thou, pale Moon ! turn paler at the sound.
Man is to man the forest, surest ill.
A previous blast foretels the rising storm ;
O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall ;
Volcano's bellow ere they disembody ; 220
Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour ;
And smoke betray's the wide-consuming fire :
Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
Is this the flight of Fancy ? would it were ! 225
Heav'n's sov'reign saves all beings, but himself,
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

Fir'd is the Muse ? and let the Muse be fir'd :
Who not inflam'd when what he speaks he feels,
And in the nerve most tender, in his friends ? 230
Shame to mankind ! Philander had his foes ;
He felt the truths I sing, and I in him :
But he nor I feel more. Past ills, Narcissa !
Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart !
Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs ; 235
Pangs num'rous as the num'rous ills that swarm'd
O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clust'ring there,
Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,
Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.

Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale) 240
 How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd?
 An aspic each, and all an hydra was.
 What strong Herculean virtue could suffice? —
 Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?
 This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews, 245
 And each tear mourns its own distinct distress.
 And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands
 Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.
 A grief like this proprietors excludes:
 Not friends along such obsequies deplore; 250
 They make mankind the mourner; carry sighs
 Far as the fatal flame can wing her way,
 And turn the gayest thought of gayest age
 Down their right channel, thro' the vale of death.
 The vale of death! that hush'd Cimmerian vale, 255
 Where Darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,
 With raven wing incumbent, waits the day
 (Dread day!) that interdicts all future change!
 That subterranean world, that land of ruin!
 Fit walk, Lorenzo! for proud human thought! 260
 There let my thought expatriate, and explore
 Balsamic truths and healing sentiments,
 Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.
 For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,
 My Soul! "The fruits of dying friends survey; 265
 "Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;
 "Give Death his eulogy; thy fear subdue;

“ And labour that first pain of noble minds,

“ A manly scorn of terror from the tomb.”

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave. 270

As poets feign'd from Ajax' streaming blood

Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flow'r,

Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.

And fill, of dying friends; what fruit from these?

It brings us more than triple aid; an aid 275

To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,

To damp our brambles and crows, and abate

That glare of life which often blinds the wise.

Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth 280

Our rugged path to death; to break those bars

Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws

Cross our obstructed way, and thus to make

Welcome, as life, our port from ev'ry storm.

Each friend by Fate snatch'd from us is a plume

Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity, 286

Which makes us stoop from our aerial heights,

And, damp'd with omen of our own decease,

On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,

Just skim earth's surface ere we break it up, 290

O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,

And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends

Are angels sent on errands full of love;

For us they languish, and for us they die:

And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain? 295

Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
Shall we disdain their silent, soft, address,
Their posthumous advice, and pious pray'r?
Senseless as herds that graze their hallow'd graves, 300
Tread under foot their agonies and groans,
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?

Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;
Give it its wholesome empire! let it reign,
That kind chastiser of thy soul, in joy! 305
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast.
Auspicious era! golden days, begin!
The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire,
And why not think on death? Is life the theme 310
Of ev'ry thought? and wish of ev'ry hour?
And song of ev'ry joy? surprising truth!
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange,
To wave the num'rous ills that seize on life
As their own property, their lawful prey; 315
Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage,
His luxuries have left him no reserve,
No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights:
On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,
And in the tasteless present chews the past; 320
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down,
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years
Have disinherited his future hours,

Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.

Live ever here, Lorenzo! — shocking thought!

So shocking, they who wish disown it too; 326

Disown from shame what they from folly crave.

Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?

For what live ever here? — with lab'ring step

To tread our former footsteps? pace the round 339

Eternal? to climb life's worn heavy wheel,

Which draws up nothing new? to beat, and beat,

The beaten track? to bid each wretched day

The former mock? to surfeit on the same,

And yawn our joys? or thank a misery 335

For change, tho' sad? to see what we have seen?

Hear, till unheard, the same old sabber'd tale?

To taste the tasted, and at each return

Less tasteful? o'er our palates to decant

Another vintage? strain a flatter year 340

Thro' loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?

Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits!

Ill ground, and worse concocted! load, not life!

The rational soul kennels of excess!

Still-streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch! 345

Trembling each gulp, lest death should snatch the bowl.

Such of our fine ones is the wish refin'd!

So would they have it: elegant desire!

Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds?

But such examples might their riot awe. 350

Thro' want of virtue, that is, want of thought,

(Tho' on bright thought they father all their sighs)
 'To what are they reduc'd? to love and hate
 The same vain world; to censure and espouse
 This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool. 353
 Each moment of each day; to flatter bad
 'Thro' dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,
 Barren, to them, of good, and sharp with ills,
 And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,
 And infamous for wrecks of human hope— 360
 Scar'd at the gloomy gulf that yawns beneath.
 Such are their triumphs! such their pangs, of joy!

'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene,
 'This hugg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?
 One only, but that one what all may reach: 365
 Virtue—she, wonder-working goddess! charms
 'That rock to bloom, and tames the painted shrew;
 And, what will more surprise, Lorenzo! gives
 To life's sick, nauseous, iteration, change,
 And straightens Nature's circle to a line. 370
 Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo! lend an ear,
 A patient ear, thou'lt blush to disbelieve.

A languid, leaden iteration reigns,
 And ever must, o'er those whose joys are joys
 Of sight, smell, taste. The cuckow-seasons sing 375
 The same dull note to such as nothing prize
 But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,
 To doting sense indulge: but nobler minds,
 Which relish fruits unripen'd by the sun,

Make their days various, various as the dyes, 389
 On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays,
 On minds of dove-like innocence possess'd,
 On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,
 Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves,
 In that for which they long, for which they live, 388
 Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heav'nly hope,
 Each rising morning, sees still higher rise;
 Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents,
 To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame,
 While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel, 399
 Rolling beneath their elevated ames,
 Makes their fair prospect fairer ev'ry hour,
 Advancing virtue in a line to bliss;
 Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire,
 And bliss, which Christian schemes alone ensure! 395

And shall we then, for virtue's sake, commence
 Apostates, and turn infidels for joy?
 A truth it is few doubt, but fewer trust,
 "He sins against this life who slight the next."
 What is this life? how few their fav'rite know? 400
 Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
 By passionately loving life we make
 Lov'd Life unlovely, hugging her to death,
 We give to time eternity's regard,
 And, dreaming, take our passage for our port. 405
 Life has no value as an end, but means;
 An end deplorable! a means dying!

When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;
 A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much.
 Like some fair hem of life, life is most enjoy'd 410
 When courted least; most worth when disesteem'd;
 Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;
 In prospect richer far; important! awful!
 Not to be mention'd but with shouts of praise!
 Not to be thought on but with tales of joy! 415
 The mighty Balls of eternal bliss!

Where now the barren rock? the painted shrew?
 Where now, Lorenzo! life's eternal round?
 Have I not made my triple promise good?
 Vain is the world, but only to the vain. 420
 To what compare we then this varying scene,
 Whose worth, ambiguous, rises and declines?
 Waxes and wanes? (in all propitious Night
 Assists me here) compare it to the moon;
 Dark in herself, and indigent, but rich 425
 In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere.
 When gross guilt interposes, lab'ring earth,
 O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy;
 Her joys, at brightest, pallid to that font
 Of full effulgent glory whence they flow. 430

Nor is that glory distant. Oh, Lorenzo!
 A good man and an angel! these between
 How thin the barrier! what divides their fate?
 Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year;
 Or if an age, it is a moment still; 435

A moment, or eternity's forgot.
 Then be what once they were who now are gods;
 Be what Philander was, and claim the skies
 Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass;
 The soft transition call it, and be cheer'd:
 Such it is often, and why not to thee?
 To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,
 And may itself procure what it presumes.
 Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduc'd;
 Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.
 "Strange competition!"—True, Lorenzo! strange!
 So little life can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,
 Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
 Thro' chinks, styl'd organs, dim life peeps at light;
 Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day.
 All eye, all ear, the disembod' d power,
 Death has feign'd evils nature shall not feel;
 Life ill's substantial wisdom cannot shun.
 Is not the mighty Mind, that son of heav'n,
 By tyrant Life dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd?
 By Death enlarg'd, ennobled, deify'd?
 Death but intombs the body, life the soul.
 "Is Death then guiltless? How he marks his way
 "With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!
 "Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!
 "With various lustres these light up the world,
 "Which death puts out, and darkens human race!"

I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just:
 The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror! 465
 Death humbles these; more barb'rous Life the man!
 Life is the triumph of our mould'ring clay;
 Death of the spirit infinite! divine!
 Death has no dread but what frail life imparts;
 Nor life true joy but what kind death improves: 470
 No bliss has life to boast, till death can give
 Far greater: Life's a debtor to the grave;
 Dark lattices tettering in eternal day.
 Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life
 Which sends celestial souls on errands vile; 475
 To cater for the sense, and serve at boards
 Where ev'ry ranger of the wilds, perhaps
 Each reptile, justly claims our upper-hand.
 Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,
 In all the dainties of a brute bemo'd! 480
 Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death
 Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,
 Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,
 And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,
 And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss: 485
 What need I more? O Death! the palm is thine.
 Then welcome, Death! thy dreaded harbingers,
 Age and disease, Disease, the long my guest,
 That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life,
 Which pluck'd a little more will toll the bell 490
 That calls my few friends to my funeral;

Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,
 While Reason and Religion, better taught,
 Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb
 With wreath triumphant. Death is victory;
 It binds in chains the raging ills of life,
 Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,
 Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
 That ills corrosive, cares importunate,
 Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine
 Our day of dissolution!—name it right,
 'Tis our great pay-day: 'tis our harvest, rich
 And ripe. What tho' the sickle, sometimes keen,
 Just scars us as we reap the golden grain?
 More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.
 Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,
 Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays
 For mighty gain: the gain of each a life!
 But, O! the last the former so transcends,
 Life dies compar'd; Life lives beyond the grave.
 And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?
 Death! the great counsellor, who man inspires
 With ev'ry nobler thought and fairer deed!
 Death! the deliverer who rescues man!
 Death! the rewarder, who the rescu'd crowns!
 Death! that absolves my birth, a curse without it!
 Rich Death! that realizes all my cares,
 Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!
 Death! of all pain the period, not of joy:

Joy's source and subject still subsist unhurt; 320
 One in my soul, and one in her great fire,
 Tho' the four winds were warring for my dust.
 Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,
 Tho' prison'd there, my dust, too, I reclaim,
 (To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres)
 And live entire. Death is the crown of life: 326
 Were death deny'd, poor man would live in vain:
 Were death deny'd, to live would not be life:
 Were death deny'd, ev'n fools would wish to die.
 Death wounds to cure; we fall, we rise, we reign! 330
 Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies,
 Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.
 Death gives us more than was in Eden lost:
 This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
 When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
 When shall I die?—when shall I live for ever? 336

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THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT IV.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

Containing

OUR ONLY CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH.

AND PROPER SENTIMENTS OF HEART ON THAT
INESTIMABLE BLESSING.

Humbly inscribed

TO THE HON. MR. YORKE,

A MUCH-indebted Muse, O Yorke! intrudes.
Amid the smiles of fortune and of youth;
Thine ear is patient of a serious song,
How deep implanted in the breast of man
The dread of death? I sing its sovereign cure.
Why start at Death? where is he! Death arriv'd,
Is past; not come, or gone; he's never here.
Ere hope, sensation fails. Black-boding man
Receives, not suffers, Death's tremendous blow;
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve;
The terrors of the living, not the dead;
Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch.

Volume I.

H

Man makes a death which Nature never made, 15
 Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
 And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.

But were Death frightful, what has age to fear?
 If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,
 And shelter in his hospitable gloom. 20
 I scarce can meet a monument but holds
 My younger; ev'ry date cries—"Come away."
 And what recalls me? look the world around,
 And tell me what. The wisest cannot tell.
 Should any born of woman give his thought 25
 Full range on just Dislike's unbounded field;
 Of things the vanity, of men the flaws;
 Flaws in the best; the many flaw all o'er;
 As leopards spotted, or as Ethiops dark;
 Vivacious ill; good dying immature; 30
 (How immature Narcissa's marble tells)
 And at its death bequeathing endless pain;
 His heart, tho' bold, would sicken at the sight,
 And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant 35
 To lucky life) some perquisites of joy;
 A time there is when, like a thrice-told tale,
 Long-ris'd life of sweet can yield no more,
 But from our comment on the comedy,
 Pleasing reflections on parts well-sustain'd, 40
 Or purpos'd emendations where we fail'd,
 Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,

When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,
Toss Fortune back her tinsel and her plume,
And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene. I

With me that time is come; my world is dead;
A new world rises, and new manners reign.
Foreign comedians, a spruce band! arrive,
To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.

What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze;
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;
Nor that the worst. Ah me! the dire effect
Of loit'ring here, of death defrauded long
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)
My very master knows me not.

Shall I dare say peculiar is the fate?
I've been so long remember'd I'm forgot;
An object ever pressing dims the sight,
And hides behind its ardour to be seen
When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the nectar of the great,
And squeeze my hand, and beg me home to-morrow.
Refusal! canst thou wear a smoother form?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme.
Who cheapens life abates the fear of death;
Twice told the period spent on Subboun Troy,
Court-favours, yet untaken, I besiege,
Ambition's ill-judg'd effort to be rich,
Alas! ambition makes my little less,
Embittering the possess'd. Why wish for more?

Wishing, of all employments is the worst;
 Philosophy's reverse, and health's decay;
 Were I as plump as fiddle, all Theology
 Wishing would waite on me, to this shackle again;
 Were I as wealthy as a South-Sea-deck, 75

Wishing is an expected to be poor;
 Wishing, that constant treacher of a fool;
 Caught, ere we come, plung'd off by phreases
 And simpler diet, gifts of right life!

Blest be that hard divine which gently laid
 My heart at rest beneath this humble shed;
 The world's a (statly bark) on dangerous seas
 With pleasure seen, but boarded at our port: 80

Here on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
 I hear the tumult of the distant throng;

As that of seas remote, or dying storm;
 And meditate on teches more silent fill;

Pursue my thoughts, and fight the fear of death;
 Here, like a shepherd gaining from his hut,

Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,
 Eager Ambition's fiery chase I see;

I see the striding hunt of noisy men;
 Burst law's inclosure, leap the bounds of right;

Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey;
 As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles; 95

Till Death, that mighty hunter, catch them all.
 Why all this toil for triumphs or an hour?

What tho' we wade in wealth, or for in game?

Earth's highest station ends in; "Here he lies," b8 A
 And "dust to dust," concludes her noblest song; 100
 If this song lives, posterity shall know
 One, tho' in Britain born, with courtiers bred, o1 W
 Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late, A
 Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
 For future vacancies in church or state, o105
 Some avocation detaining it— to die;
 Unbit by rage canine of dying rich, o11
 Guilt's blunder! and the loudest laugh of Hell. b8 A

O my Coëvals! remnants of yourselves! o11
 Poor human ruins! tott'ring o'er the grave! o10
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
 Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil?
 Shall our pale wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,
 Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age? 115
 With av'rice and convulsions, grasping hard
 Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?
 Man wants but little, nor that little long:
 How soon must he resign his very dust,
 Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour! 120
 Years unexperient'd rush on num'rous ill:
 And soon as man, expert from time, has found
 The key of life, it opes the gates of death. 11 A

When in this vale of years I backward look,
 And miss such numbers, numbers, too, of such 125
 Firmer in health, and greener in their age,

And stricter on their guard, and sifter true
 To play life's subtle game, he scarce believes
 I still survive. And still fond life, as if
 Who scarce can think it possible I live
 Alive by miracle, or what is more
 Alive by Mead! I am still alive
 Who long have bury'd what gives life to live
 Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought
 Life's lee is not more shallow than impure
 And vapid: Sense and Reason shew the door,
 Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great Arbitrer of life and death
 Nature's immortal, immaterial Sun
 Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
 From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay
 The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath
 The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,
 To drink the spirit of the golden day,
 And triumph in existence, and couldst know
 No motive but my bliss, and hast ordain'd
 A rise in blessing with the Patriarch's joy
 Thy call I follow to the land unknown;
 I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust;
 Or life or death is equal; neither weighs;
 All weight in this. O let me live to thee!

Tho' Nature's terrors, thus, may be repress'd;
 Still frowns grim Death, guilt points the tyrant's spear.
 And whence all human guilt? From death forgot.

Ah me! too long I set at naught the swarms
 Of friendly warnings which around me flew;
 And smil'd unsmitten. Small my cause to smile!
 Death's admonitions, like shafts upwards shot,
 More dreadful by delay, the longer ere
 They strike, our hearts the deeper is their wound. 165
 O think how deep, Lorenzo! here it stings;
 Who can appease its anguish? How it burns!
 What hand the barb'd, envenom'd, thought can draw?
 What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,
 And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb? 167

With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see:
 Ah! too conspicuous! it is fix'd on high.
 On high?—what means my frenzy? I blaspheme:
 Alas! how low? how far beneath the lies?
 The skies it form'd, and now it bleeds for me. 170
 But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds;
 Draw the dire steel—ah, no! the dreadful blessing
 What heart or ear can sustain or dares forego?
 There hangs all human hope; that nail supports
 The falling universe: that gone we drop; 175
 Horror receives us, and the dismal wish
 Creation had been smother'd in her birth—
 Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust,
 When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne;
 In heav'n itself can such indulgence dwell? 180
 O what a groan was there! a groan not his!
 He seiz'd our dreadful right, the load sustain'd,

And heav'd the mountain from a guilty world;
 A thousand worlds, so bought, were bought too dear;
 Sensations new in angels' bosoms rise;
 Suspend their song; and make a pause in life

O for their song to reach my lofty throne!
 Inspire me, Night! with all thy tuneful spheres,
 Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes;
 And shew to men the dignity of man;
 Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.

Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,
 And Christian languish? On our hearts, not heads,
 Falls the soul-insamy. My heart awake!
 What can awake thee, unawak'd by this,

"Expend'd Ditties on human weal?"
 Feel the great truths which burst the tenfold night
 Of Heathen error with a golden flood
 Of endless day. To feel is to be fir'd;
 And to believe, Lorenzo, is to feel.

Thou most indulgent, most tremendous Pow'r!
 Still more tremendous for thy wondrous love!
 That arms with awe more awful thy commands,
 And foul transgression dips in sev'nfold guilt;
 How our hearts tremble at thy love immense!
 In love immense, inviolably just!
 Thou, rather than thy justice should be stain'd,
 Didst stain the cross; and work of wonders far
 The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.

Bold thought! shall I dare speak it or repress?

Should man more execrate or boast the guilt
 Which rous' such vengeance? Which such love inflam'd?
 O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with god's stretch'd arms
 Stern Justice and soft-smiling Love embrace,
 Supporting his full majesty, thy throne;
 When foun'd his majesty to need support,
 Or that, or man, inevitably lost:
 What! But the fathomless of thought alone
 Could labour such impedient from despair,
 And rescue both? Both rescue! Both small!
 O how are both exalted by the deed
 The wondrous deed of shall & call (be more)
 A wonder in Omnipotence itself
 A mystery no less to gods than men
 Nor thus our infidels th' Eternal draw
 A God all o'er confirmate, absolute
 Full o' d; in his whole round of rays complete:
 They set at odds Heav'n's jar-ring attributes
 And with one excellence another wound
 Maim Heav'n's perfection, break its equal beams,
 Bid mercy triumph over—God himself
 Undermin'd by their opprobrious praise.
 A God all mercy is a God unjust.

Ye brainless Wits! ye baptiz'd infidels!
 Ye have for mending! warr'd to fester stains!
 The ransom was paid down; the fond of heav'n,
 Heav'n's inexhaustible, exhausted fund;
 Amazing and sav'd, pou'd forth the price;

All price beyond thol' curious to compute,
 Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum:
 Its value vast ungrasp'd by minds create,
 For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.

And was the ransom paid? it was; and paid
 (What can exact the bounty more?) for you
 The sun beheld it.—No, the shocking scene
 Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;
 Not such as this, not such as Nature makes;
 A midnight Nature shudder'd to behold;
 A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without
 Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown
 Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain? or start
 At that enormous load of human guilt
 Which bow'd his blessed head, o'erwhelm'd his cross,
 Made groan the spheres, burst earth's marble womb
 With pangs, strange pangs! deliver'd of her dead?
 Hell howl'd; and heav'n that hour let fall a tear:
 Heav'n wept, that men might smile! Heav'n bled, that
 Might never die!

And is devotion stilted? 'tis compell'd.
 What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these?
 Such contemplations mount us, and should mount
 The mind still higher, nor ever glance on man
 Unraptur'd, unloos'd.—Where roll my thoughts
 To rest from wonders? other wonders rise,
 And strike where'er they roll: my soul is caught
 Heav'n's sov'reign blessings, clust'ring from the cross,

Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,
 The pris'ner of amaze!—In his blest life
 I see the path, and in his death the price,
 And in his great ascent the proof supreme,
 Of immortality.—And did he rise?

Hear, O ye Nations! hear it, O ye Dead!
 He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of death,
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!
 And give the King of glory to come in.

Who is the King of glory? he who left
 His throne of glory for the pang of death.
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!
 And give the King of glory to come in.

Who is the King of glory? he who slew
 The rav'nous foe that gorg'd all human race!
 The King of glory he, whose glory fill'd
 Heav'n with amazement at his love to man,

And with divine complacency beheld
 Pow'rs most illumin'd wilder'd in the theme.

The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?
 Oh, the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolish'd throne!
 Last gasp of vanquish'd Death. Shout, earth and heav'n,
 This sum of good to man! whose nature then
 Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.

Then, then, I rose; then first Humanity
 Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,
 (Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth,
 Seiz'd in our name. E'er since 'tis blasphemous

To call man mortal: Man's mortality
 Was then transferr'd to death, and heav'n's duration
 Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,
 This child of dust. — Man, all immortal hail;
 Hail, Heav'n! all lavish of strange gifts to man!
 Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss. 300

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,
 On Christian joy's exulting wing, above
 Th' Aonian mount! — Alas! small cause for joy!
 What if to pain immortal? if extent
 Of being, to preclude a cleft of woe? 305
 Where, then, my boast of immortality?
 I boast it still, tho' cover'd o'er with guilt:
 For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd;
 'Tis guilt alone can justify his death;
 Nor that, unless his death can justify 310
 Relenting guilt in Heav'n's indulgent sight.
 If, sick of folly, I relent, he writes
 My name in heav'n with that inverted spear
 (A spear deep-dipt in blood!) which pierc'd his side,
 And open'd there a fount for all mankind, 315
 Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink and live:
 This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

And what is this? — Survey the wondrous cure,
 And at each step let higher wonder rise!
 " Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon 320
 " Thro' means that speak its value infinite!
 " A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!

" With blood divine of him I made my foe!
 " Persisted to provoke the world and aid;
 " Blest, and chafis'd, a flagrant rebel still;
 " A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne;
 " Nor I alone, a rebel universe
 " My species up in arms! not one exempt!
 " Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies,
 " Most joy'd for the redeem'd from deepest guilt!
 " As if our race were held of highest rank,
 " And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man!"

Bound ev'ry heart! and ev'ry bosom burn
 O what a scale of miracles is there!
 Its lowest round high, planted on the skies,
 Its tow'ring summit lost beyond the thought
 Of man or angel! Oh that I could climb
 The wonderful ascent with equal praise
 Praise, flow for ever, (if astonishment
 Will give thee leave) my praise! for ever flow;
 Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heaven
 More fragrant than Arabia's sacrifice,
 And all her spicy mountains in a flame!

So dear, so due to Heav'n shall Praise descend
 With her soft plume (from plausive angels' wing
 First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,
 Thus diving in the pockets of the great
 Is praise the perquisite of ev'ry paw,
 Tho' black as hell, that grapples well for gold
 Oh love of gold! thou meanest of amours!

Shall Praise her odours waste on virtues dead,
 Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,
 Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,
 Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,
 A scavenger in scenes where vacant posts,
 Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect
 Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones
 Return, apostate Praise! thou vagabond!
 Thou prostitute! to thy first love return,
 Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivall'd theme. 360

There flow redundant, like Meander flow,
 Back to thy fountain, to that parent pow'r
 Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,
 The soul to be: Men homage pay to men,
 Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow,
 In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
 Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,
 Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing,
 To prostrate angels an amazing scene!
 O the presumption of man's awe for man!— 370
 Man's Author! End! Restorer! Law! and Judge!
 Thine all; Day thine, and thine this gloom of Night,
 With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds,
 What night eternal but a frown from thee?
 What heav'n's meridian glory but thy smile?
 And shall not praise be thine, not human praise,
 While heav'n's high host on hallelujahs live
 O may I breathe no longer than I breathe

My soul in praise to him who gave my soul,
 And all her infinite of prospect fair, 380
 Cut thro' the shades of hell, great Love! by thee,
 Oh most adorable! most unador'd!
 Where shall that praise begin which ne'er should end?
 Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause!
 How is Night's fable mantle labour'd o'er, 385
 How richly wrought with attributes divine!
 What wisdom shines! what love! This midnight pomp,
 This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid!
 Built with divine ambition! nought to thee;
 For others this profusion: Thou apart, 390
 Above! beyond! Oh tell me, mighty Mind!
 Where art thou? Shall I dive into the deep?
 Call to the sun? or ask the roaring winds
 For their Creator? shall I question loud
 The thunder, if in that th' Almighty dwells? 395
 Or holds he furious storms in straiten'd reins,
 And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car?
 What mean these questions?—Trembling I retract;
 My prostrate soul adores the present God:
 Praise I a distant Deity? He tunes 400
 My voice (if tun'd;) the nerve that writes sustains:
 Wrapp'd in his being I resound his praise:
 But tho' past all diffus'd, without a shore
 His essence, local is his throne (as meet)
 To gather the dispers'd (as standards call 405
 The list'd from afar;) to fix a point;

A central point, collective of his sons;
 Since finite ev'ry nature but his own;
 The nameless He, whose nod is Nature's birth;
 And Nature's shield the shadow of his hand;
 Her dissolution his suspended smile;
 The great First-Lift pavilion'd high he sits:
 In darkness; from excessive splendour borne,
 By gods unseen, unless thro' lustre lost:
 His glory, to created glory, bright;
 As that to central horrors: he looks down
 On all that soars, and spans immensity:
 Tho' night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,
 Boundless Creation! what art thou? a beam,
 A mere effluvia of his majesty;
 And shall an atom of this atom world
 Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of heav'n;
 Down to the centre should I send my thought
 Thro' beds of glittering ore and glowing gems,
 Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay;
 Goes out in darkness: if, on flowing wing,
 I send it thro' the boundless vault of stars,
 (The stars, tho' rich, what dress their gold to thee,
 Great! good! wise! wonderful! eternal King!)
 If to those conspicuous stars thy throne around,
 Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing bliss,
 And ask their strains, they want it, know they want;
 Poor their abundance, humble their sublimity,
 Languid their energy, their ardour cold;

Indebted still, their highest rapture burns, 433
 Short of its mark, defective, tho' divine.
 Still more—this theme is man's, and man's alone;
 Their vast appointments reach it not; they see
 On earth a bounty not indulg'd on high,
 And downward look for heav'n's superior praise! 440
 First-born of Ether! high in fields of light
 View man, to see the glory of your God
 Could angels envy, they had envy'd here:
 And some did envy; and the rest, tho' gods,
 Yet still gods unredeem'd, (there triumphs man, 445
 Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies)
 They less would feel, tho' more adorn my theme.
 They sung creation (for in that they shar'd)
 How rose in melody that child of Love!
 Creation's great superior, man! is thine; 450
 Thine is redemption; they just gave the key:
 'Tis thine to raise and eternize the song,
 Tho' human, yet divine; for should not this
 Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here?
 Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime;
 Redemption! 'twas the labour of the Skins!
 Far more than labour—it was death in heav'n.
 A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,
 If not far bolder still to disbelieve. 455

Here pause and ponder. Was there death in heav'n?
 What then on earth? on earth, which struck the blow?
 Who struck it? Who?—O how is man enlarg'd,

Seen thro' this medium! How the pygmy towers!
 How counterpois'd his origin from dust! 465
 How counterpois'd to dust his sad return!
 How voided his vast distance from the skies!
 How near he presses on the seraph's wing!
 Which is the seraph? which the born of clay?
 How this demonstrates, thro' the thickest cloud
 Of guilt and clay condenses to the son of Heaven! 470
 The double soul; the male, and the remnant
 And shall Heaven's double property be lost?
 Man's double madness only can destroy
 To man the bleeding Cross has promis'd all;
 The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace 475
 Who gave his life, what grace shall he deny?
 O Ye! who from this dock of ages leap
 Apostates, plunging headlong in the deep
 What cordial joy, what consolation, even
 Whatever wings arise, in billows roll
 Our int'rest in the Master of the storm;
 Cling there, and in which'd Nature's ruins smile,
 While vile apostates tremble in a cald. 480
 Man! know thyself: all wisdom waits on thee
 To none man seems ignoble but to man
 Angels that grandeur men's rebuke drink
 How long shall human frailty be their book?
 Degenerate Moham! and Whore by thee
 The beam dim reason sheds no wonder there:
 What high contents! illustrious faculties! 490

But the grand comment, which displays at full
Our human height, soars sever'd from divine,
By Heav'n compos'd; was publish'd on the cross.

Who looks on that, and sees not in himself
An awful sing'ery a terrestrial God?
A glorious partner with the Deity
In that high, deathless, immortal life?
If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm.

I gaze, and as I gaze my adoring soul
Catches strange fire, Eternity, at thee, I feel
And drops the world;—but, rather, more enjoys.

How chang'd the face of Nature! how improv'd!
What seem'd a chaos shines a glorious world,
Or what a world as Eden; heighten'd all!

It is another scene! another self!
And still another, as time rolls along
And that's self far more illustrious still!

Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades
Unpierc'd by bold Conjecture's keenest ray,
What evolutions of surprising Fate!

How Nature opens, and receives my soul
In boundless walks of raptur'd thought! where gods
Encounter and embrace me! What new births

Of strange all creature, foreign to the sun,
Where what now charant, perhaps what'er exists,
Old time, and future creation, are forgot!

Is this extravagant? of man we form
Extravagant conception to be just!

Conception unconfin'd wants wings to reach him; 41
 Beyond its reach the Godhead only more. 320
 He the great Father! kindled at one flame 42
 The world of rationals; one spirit pour'd out
 From spirits' awful Fountain; pour'd himself
 Thro' all their souls, but not in equal stream, 43
 Profuse, or frugal; of th' inspiring God, 325
 As his wise plan demanded; and when past
 Their various trials, in their various spheres,
 If they continue rational, as made,
 Reforbs them all into himself again, 44
 His throne their centre, and his smile their crown. 330

Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,
 Tho' yet unsung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold?
 Angels are men of a superior kind;
 Angels are men in lighter habit clad,
 High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight; 335
 And men are angels, loaded for an hour,
 Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,
 And slipp'ry step, the bottom of the steep,
 Angels their failings, mortals have their praise:
 While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,
 And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,
 Which flames eternal crimson thro' the skies, 340
 Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,
 Yet absent; but not absent from their love.
 Michael has fought our battles; Raphael sung
 Our triumphs; Gabriel on our cirands flown,

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Sent by the Sov'reign: and are these, O Maid!
Thy friends? thy warm allies? and thou (shame, birth
The check to cinder!) rival to the brute!

Religion's all! Descending from the skies
To wretched man, the goddess in her list
Holds out this world, and in her right the next!
Religion! the sole saviour! man's main stay—
Supporter sole of man above himself—
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,

She gives the soul a soul that acts a god!
Religion! providence! and after, fate!
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;
This can support us, all is sea besides;
Sinks under us, bestorms, and then devours;
His hand the good man, fasten'd on the skies;
And bids earth roll; he feels her idle whirl.

As when! a wretch, from thick polluted air,
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,
And dungeon horrors, by kind Fate discharg'd,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects ope;
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load,
As if new-born he gush'd in the change;
So joys the soul, when from impurities
And sordid fildes, from servitude and from
Of ties temporal set at large, she mounts
To Reason's region, her own element,
Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness, 573
 And, groaning Calvary! of thee: there shine
 The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;
 There sacred violence assaults the soul;
 There nothing but compulsion is forborne.
 Can love allure us? or can terror awe?
 He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun.
 He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.
 If in his love so terrible, what then
 His wrath inflam'd? his tenderness on fire?
 Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires 585
 Can pray'r, can praise, avert it?—Thou, my all!
 My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!
 My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!
 My light in darkness! and my life in death! 590
 My boast thro' time! bliss thro' eternity!
 Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,
 Of fathom thy profound of love to man!
 To man of men the meanest, ev'n to me;
 My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these? 595
 What then art thou? by what name shall I call thee?
 Knew I the name devout archangels use,
 Devout archangels should the name enjoy,
 By me unrivall'd; thousands more sublime,
 None half so dear as that which, tho' unspoke, 600
 Still glows at heart: O how Omnipotence
 Is lost in love! thou great Philanthropist!

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Father of angels! but the friend of man! (I doubt not)
 Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born! (I doubt not)
 Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
 From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood! 606
 How art thou pleas'd by bounty to distress!
 To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
 Too big for birth! to favour and confound;
 To challenge, and to distance all return! 610
 Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,
 And leave Praise panting in the distant vale!
 Thy right too great defrauds thee of thy due,
 And sacrilegious our sublimest song.
 But since the naked will obtains thy smile,
 Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,
 And future life symphonious to my strain,
 (That noblest hymn to Heav'n!) for ever lie
 Intomb'd my fear of death! and ev'ry fear,
 The dread of ev'ry evil, but thy frown! 620

Whom see I yonder so demurely smile?
 Laughter a labour, and might break their rest!
 Ye Quietists! in homage to the skies!
 Serene! of soft address! who mildly make
 An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,
 Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,
 But, for the blessing, wrestle not with Heav'n!
 Think you my song too turbulent? too warm?
 Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?
 Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd? 630

To touch things sacred: Oh for warmer still
 Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my pow'rs:
 Oh for an humbler heart and prouder song!
 Thou, my much-injur'd Theme, with that soft eye
 Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look
 Compassion to the coldness of my breast,
 And pardon to the winter in my strain:
 Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen, Formalists!
 On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm:
 Passion, is reason, transport, temper, here!
 Shall Heav'n, which gave us ardour, and has shewn
 Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
 What smooth, emollients in theology,
 Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors preach;
 That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise?
 Rise odours sweet from incense uninflam'd
 Devotion, when lukewarm is undevout;
 But when it glows, its heat is struck to heav'n:
 To human hearts her golden harps are strung;
 High heav'n's orchestra chaunts amen to man.

Hear I, or dream I hear their distant strain,
 Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of heav'n,
 Soft-wafted on celestial Pity's plume,
 Thro' the vast spaces of the universe,
 To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?
 Oh when will death (how stingless) like a friend
 Admit me of their choir? Oh when will death
 This mould'ring, old, partition-wall throw down?

Give beings, one in nature, one abode?
 Oh Death divine! that giv'st us to the skies: 660
 Great future! glorious patron of the past
 And present! when shall I thy shrine adore?
 From Nature's continent, immensely wide,
 Immensely blest, this little isle of life,
 This dark incarcerating colony 665
 Divides us. Happy day that breaks our chain!
 That mañumits; that calls from exile home;
 That leads to Nature's great metropolis,
 And re-admits us, thro' the guardian hand
 Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne, 670
 Who hears our Advocate, and thro' his wounds
 Beholding man, allows that tender name.
 'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command;
 'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise.
 'Tis impious in a good man to be sad. 675
 See'st thou, Lorenzo, where hangs all our hope?
 Touch'd by the cross we live, or more than die;
 That touch which touch'd not angels; more divine
 Than that which touch'd confusion into form,
 And darkness into glory: partial touch! 680
 Ineffably pre-eminent regard!
 Sacred to man, and sov'reign thro' the whole
 Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs
 From heav'n thro' all duration, and supports,
 In one illustrious and amazing plan, 685
 Thy welfare, Nature! and thy God's renown.

That touch, with charms celestial, heals the soul
 Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
 Turns earth to heav'n, to heav'nly thrones transforms
 The ghastly ruins of the mould'ring tomb: 690

Dost ask me when? When he who dy'd returns;
 Returns, how chang'd! where then the man of woe?
 In Glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,
 And all his courts, exalted by the tide
 Of deities triumphant in his train,
 Leave a stupendous solitude in heaven;
 Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase
 Of pomp and multitude; a radiant band
 Of angels new, of angels from the tomb: 700

Is this by fancy thrown remote? and rise
 Dark doubts between the promise and event?
 I send thee not to volumes for thy cure;
 Read Nature; Nature is a friend to truth;
 Nature is Christian; preaches to mankind,
 And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.
 Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?
 Th' illustrious stranger passing, terror sheds
 On gazing nations from his fiery train,
 Of length enormous, takes his ample round
 Thro' depths of ether; coasts unnumber'd worlds
 Of more than solar glory; doubles wide
 Heav'n's mighty cape; and then revisits earth,
 From the long travel of a thousand years
 Thus at the destin'd period shall return: 710

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He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze, 715
 And with him all our triumph o'er the tomb,
 Nature is dumb on this important point,
 Or Hope precarious in low whisper breathes;
 Faith speaks aloud, distinct; ev'n adders hear,
 But turn, and dart into the dark again. 720
 Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death,
 To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,
 And lands Thought smoothly on the farther shore.
 Death's terror is the mountain faith removes,
 That mountain-barrier between man and peace. 725
 'Tis faith disarms Destruction, and absolves
 From ev'ry clam'rous charge the guiltless tomb.
 Why disbelieve? Lorenzo!—Reason bids,
 "All-sacred Reason."—Hold her sacred still;
 Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame: 730
 All-sacred Reason! source and soul of all
 Demanding praise on earth, on earth above!
 My heart is thine; deep in its inmost folds
 Live thou with life; live dearest of the two.
 Wear I the blessed cross, by Fortune stamp'd, 735
 On passive Nature before Thought was born?
 My birth's blind bigot! fir'd with local zeal!
 No; Reason rebaptiz'd me when adult;
 Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale;
 My heart became the convert of my head, 740
 And made that choice which once was but my fate.
 "On argument alone my faith is built."

Reason pursu'd is faith; and unpursu'd, no more;
 Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more;
 And such our proof, that or our faith is right,
 Or Reason lies, and Heav'n design'd it wrong,
 Absolve we this? what then is blasphemy?
 Fond as we are, and justly fond of faith,
 Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;
 The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear,
 Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flower;
 The fading flow'r shall die, but Reason lives
 Immortal, as her Father in the skies.
 When faith is virtue, reason makes it so;
 Wrong not the Christian; think not reason yours;
 'Tis reason our great Master holds so dear;
 'Tis reason's injur'd rights his wrathresents;
 'Tis Reason's voice obey'd his glories crown;
 To give lost reason life he pour'd his own;
 Believe, and shew the reason of a man;
 Believe, and taste the pleasure of a god;
 Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.
 Thro' reason's wounds alone thy faith can die,
 Which dying, tenfold terror gives to Death,
 And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud praises, due
 To those who push our antidote aside;
 Those boasted friends to reason and to man,
 Whose fatal love stabs ev'ry joy, and leaves
 Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart.

These pompous sons of reason idoliz'd,
 And vivify'd at once; of reason dead,
 Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old;
 What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?
 While love of truth thro' all their camp resounds, 775
 They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
 Spike up their inch of reason on the point
 Of philosophic wit, call'd Argument,
 And then exulting in their taper, cry,
 "Behold the sun;" and, Indian-like, adore. 780

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!
 Thou Maker of new morals to mankind!
 The grand morality is love of thee.
 As wise as Socrates, if such they were,
 (Nor will they bate of that sublime renown) 785
 As wise as Socrates might justly stand
 The definition of a modern fool.

A Christian is the highest style of man.
 And is there who the blessed cross wipes off,
 As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow? 790
 If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:
 The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,
 More struck with grief or wonder who can tell?

Ye sold to sense! ye Citizens of earth!
 (For such alone the Christian banner fly) 795
 Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?
 Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:
 "He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,

" And says he call'd another; that arrives;
 " Meets the same welcome; yet he still calls on;
 " Till one calls him, who varies not his call;
 " But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound,
 " Till Nature dies, and Judgment sets him free;
 " A freedom far less welcome than his chain."

But grant man happy; grant him happy long;
 Add to life's highest prize her latest hour;
 That hour, so late, is nimble in approach;
 That, like a post, comes on in full career.
 How swift the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud!
 Where is the fable of thy former years?
 Thrown down the gulf of time; as far from thee
 As they had ne'er been thine: the day in hand,
 Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going;
 Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone;
 And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd
 By strides as swift. Eternity is all;
 And whose eternity? who triumphs there?
 Bathing for ever in the font of bliss!
 For ever basking in the Deity!
 Lorenzo! who?—thy conscience shall reply.

O give it leave to speak; 'twill speak ere long,
 Thy leave unask'd. Lorenzo! hear it now,
 While useful its advice, its accent mild.
 By the great edict, the divine decree,
 Truth is deposited with man's last hour;
 An honest hour, and faithful to her trust;

Truth ! eldest daughter of the Deity ;
 Truth ! of his council when he made the worlds ;
 Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made ;
 Tho' silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound, 830
 Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,
 That heaven-commission'd hour no sooner calls,
 But from her cavern in the soul's abyfs,
 Like him they fable under Ætna whelm'd,
 The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame, 835
 Loudly convinces, and severely pains.
 Dark dæmons I discharge, and hydra-slings ;
 The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell ;
 Just definition ! tho' by schools untaught !
 Ye deaf to truth ! peruse this parson'd page, 840
 And trust, for once, a prophet and a priest ;
 “ Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.” 842

End of Night Fourth.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT V.

THE RELAPSE.

Humbly inscribed to the

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.

LORENZO! to recriminate is just.
Fondness for fame is avarice of air.
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who fought no more.
As just thy second charge. I grant the Muse
Has often blush'd at her degen'rate sons;
Retain'd by sense to plead her filthy cause,
To raise the low, to magnify the mean,
And subtilize the gross into refin'd;
As if to magic numbers' pow'rful charm 10
'Twas given to make a civet of their song
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.
Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,
And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.
The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause. 15
We wear the chains of pleasure and of pride:
These share the man, and these distract him too;
Draw diff'rent ways, and clash in their commands.

Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars; w 11A
 But Pleasure, hawk-like, sits upon the ground: 20
 Joys shar'd by brute creation Pride resents; wofl on T
 Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy; toqt 15 O
 And both at once: a point how hard to gain; bq na O
 But what can't Wit, when stung by strong desire? 30 A
 Wit dares attempt this audacious enterprise: 35
 Since joys of sense can't rise to Reason's taste, 40
 In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge 45
 Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoops 50
 To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause: 55
 Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loose, 60
 Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl: 65
 A thousand phantoms and a thousand spells, 70
 A thousand opiates scatters to delude, 75
 To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep, 80
 And the fool'd mind of man delightfully confound: 85
 Thus that which shock'd the judgment shocks no more; 90
 That which gave Pride offence no more offends: 95
 Pleasure and Pride, by nature mortal foes, 100
 At war eternal, which in man shall reign, 105
 By Wit's address patch up a fatal peace, 110
 And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch, 115
 From rank refin'd to delicate and gay. 120
 Art, cursed Art! wipes off th' indebted blush 125
 From Nature's cheek, and bronzes ev'ry shame: 130
 Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt, 135
 And Infamy stands candidate for praise: 140

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT V.

THE RELAPSE.

Humbly inscribed to the

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.

LÖRENZO! to recriminate is just.
Fondness for fame is avarice of air.
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who sought no more.

As just thy second charge. I grant the Muse
Has often blush'd at her degen'rate sons,
Retain'd by sense to plead her filthy cause,
To raise the low, to magnify the mean,
And subtilize the gross into refin'd;
As if to magic numbers' pow'rful charm
'Twas given to make a civet of their song
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.
Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,
And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.

The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause.
We wear the chains of pleasure and of pride:
These share the man, and these distract him too;
Draw diff'rent ways, and clash in their commands.

Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars; 11A
 But Pleasure, hawk-like, nests upon the ground: 12A
 Joys shar'd by brute creation Pride resents; 13A
 Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy, 14A
 And both at once: a point how hard to gain! 15A
 But what can't Wit, when stung by strong desire? 16A

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprise: 17A
 Since joys of sense can't rise to Reason's taste, 18A
 In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge, 19A
 Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoops 20A
 To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause: 21A
 Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loof, 22A
 Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl: 23A
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 And Infamy stands candidate for praise: 38A

All writ by man in favour of the soul;
 These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend
 The flow'rs of eloquence, profusely pour'd
 O'er spotted Vice, fill half the letter'd world;
 Can pow'rs of genius exorcise their page,
 And consecrate enormities with song!

But let not these inexhaustible strains
 Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity,
 Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world
 As 'tis, in Nature's ample field, a point;
 A point in her esteem, from whence to start,
 And run the round of universal space,
 To visit being universal there,
 And being's Source, that utmost flight of mind
 Yet spite of this so vast circumference,
 Well knows but what is moral, nought is great.
 Sing Syrens only? do not angels sing?
 There is in Poesy a decent pride,
 Which well becomes her when she speaks to Prose,
 Her younger sister, happily not more wise.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo! to find pastimes here?
 No guilty passion blown into a flame,
 No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,
 No fairy field of fiction, all on flow'r,
 No rainbow colours here, or silken tale;
 But solemn counsels, images of awe,
 Truths which Eternity lets fall on man,
 With double weight, thro' these revolving spheres,

This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade:
 Thoughts such as shall revisit your last hour;
 Vist uncall'd, and live when life expires;
 And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker still
 In melancholy dipp'd; imbrovns the whole:

Yet this, even this, my laughter-loving Friends!
 Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the smile!
 If what imports you most can most engage,
 Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.
 Or if you fail me, know the wise shall taste
 The truths I sing; the truths I sing shall feel;
 And, feeling, give assent; and their assent
 Is ample recompense; is more than praise:
 But chiefly thine, O Litchfield! nor mistake;
 Think not unintro'd I force my way
 Narcissa, not unknown, not unall'd
 By virtue, or by blood, illustrious Youth;
 To thee, from blooming amaranthine bow'rs,
 Where all the language harmony, descends
 Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the Muse;
 A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise:
 Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspir'd.
 O thou, blest'd Spirit! whether the supreme,
 Great antemundane Father! in whose breast
 Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,
 And all its various revolutions roll'd
 Present, tho' future, prior to themselves;
 Whose breath can blow it into nought again;

Or from his throne some delegated pow'r,
 Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought
 From vain and vile to solid and sublime!
 Unseen! thou lead'st me to delicious draughts
 Of inspiration, from a purer stream
 And fuller of the God, than that which burst
 From fam'd Castalia; nor is yet allay'd
 My sacred thirst, tho' long my soul has rang'd
 Thro' pleasing paths of moral and divine,
 By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars.
 By them best lighted are the paths of thought;
 Nights are their days, their most-illumin'd hours.
 By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career,
 Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,
 Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.
 By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts
 Impos'd, precarious, broken, etc. mature.
 By night, from objects free, from passion cool,
 Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpress'd, the births
 Of pure election, arbitrary range,
 Not to the limits of one world confin'd,
 But from ethereal travels light on earth,
 As voyagers drop anchor for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
 Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore;
 Darkness has more divinity for me;
 It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul
 To settle on herself, our point supreme!

There lies our theatre; there sits our judge;
 Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;
 'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out
 'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reason's reign,
 And Virtue's too; these tutelary shades
 Are man's asylum from the tainted throng;
 Night is the good man's friend; and guardian too;
 It no less rescues virtue than inspires.

Virtue, for ever frail as fair, below;
 Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
 Nor touches on the world without a stain.
 The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,
 Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
 Something we thought is blotted; we resolv'd
 Is shaken; we renounc'd returns again;
 Each salutation may slide in a sin
 Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.
 Nor is it strange; light, motion, concourse, noise,
 All scatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,
 Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off
 In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,
 And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,
 And acts with double force, by few repell'd.
 Ambition fires ambition; love of gain
 Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast:
 Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours, breathe
 And inhumanity is caught from man,

From smiling morn' A sight, a single glance, and there
 And shot at random, often has brought home 160
 A sudden fever to the throbbing heart
 Of envy, rancour, or impure desire
 We see, we hear, with peril; Safety dwells
 Remote from multitude: The world's a school
 Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around 165
 We must or imitate or disapprove;
 Must list as their accomplices or foes:
 That stains our innocence, this wounds our peace.
 From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit
 With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade. 170

This sacred shade and solitude what is it?
 'Tis the felt presence of the Deity
 Few are the faults we flatter when alone;
 Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,
 And looks, like other objects, black by night. 175
 By night an Atheist half-believes a God

Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend
 The conscious moon, thro' ev'ry distant age,
 Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall
 On Contemplation's eye, her purging ray 180
 The fam'd Athenian, he who woo'd from heav'n
 Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
 And form their manners, not inflame their pride,
 While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
 His lab'ring mind, the stars in silence slide, 185
 And seem all gazing on their future guest,

See him soliciting his ardent suit
 In private audience: all the live-long night;
 Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands,
 Nor quits his theme or posture till the sun
 (Rude drunkard! rising rosy from the main)
 Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
 And gives him to the tumult of the world:
 Hail, precious Moments! stol'n from the black waste
 Of murder'd time! auspicious Midnight! hail!
 The world excluded, every passion hush'd,
 And open'd a calm intercourse with Heaven,
 Here the soul sits in council, ponders past,
 Predestines future action; sees, not feels,
 Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm.
 All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.
 What awful joy! what mental liberty!
 I am not pent in darkness; rather say
 (If not too bold) in darkness I'm imbowl'd
 Delightful gloom! the clust'ring thoughts around
 Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade,
 But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.
 Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that first fire,
 Fountain of animation! whence descends
 Urania, my celestial guest! who deigns
 Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now
 Conscious how needful discipline to man,
 From pleasing dalliance with the charms of night,
 My wand'ring thought recalls, to what excites

Far other beat of heart, Narcissa's tomb, 215
 Or is it feeble Nature calls me back;
 And breaks my spirit into grief again;
 Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?
 A cold slow puddle creeping thro' my veins?
 Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all. 220
 What are we? how unequal! now we soar
 And now we sink. To be the same transcends
 Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul
 For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.
 Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds 225
 The blush of weakness to the bane of woe.
 The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate
 In this damp, dusky region, charg'd with storms,
 But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;
 Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall: 230
 Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;
 And not to yield, tho' beaten, all our praise.
 'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.
 Tho' proud in promise, big in previous thought,
 Experience damps our triumph. I, who late 235
 Emerging from the shadows of the grave,
 Where grief detain'd me pris'ner, mounting high,
 Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,
 And call'd mankind to glory, shook off pain,
 Mortality shook off, in ether pure, 240
 And struck the stars, now feel my spirits fail;
 They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,

Like him whom fable fledg'd with waxen wings,
 In sorrow drown'd—but not in sorrow lost.
 How wretched is the man who never mourn'd!
 I dive for precious pearl in Sorrow's stream:
 Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves,
 Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain;
 (Inestimable gain!) and gives Heav'n leave
 To make him but more wretched; not more wise.

If wisdom is our lesson (and what else
 Ennobles man? what else have angels learn'd?)
 Grief! more proficient in thy school are made,
 Than Genius or proud Learning e'er could boast.
 Voracious Learning, often over-fed,
 Digests not into sense her motley meal:
 This bookcase, with dark booty almost burst,
 This forager on others' wisdom, leaves
 Her native farm, her reason, quite untill'd;
 With mix'd manure she surfeits the rank soil,
 Dung'd, but not dress'd, and rich to beggary:
 A pomp untameable of weeds prevails:
 Her servant's wealth incumber'd Wisdom mourns.

And what says Genius? "Let the dull be wise."
 Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong,
 And loves to boast, where blush men less inspir'd.
 It pleads exemption from the laws of sense,
 Considers reason as a leveller,
 And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd.
 That wise it could be thinks an ample claim;

To glory and to pleasure gives the rest.
 Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone,
 Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.

But Wisdom smiles, when humbled mortals weep:
 When Sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,
 And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning shower; 276
 Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows;
 Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.
 If so, Narcissa! welcome my Relapse;
 I'll raise a tax on my calamity, 280
 And reap rich compensation from my pain.
 I'll range the plenteous intellectual field,
 And gather ev'ry thought of sov'reign power
 To chase the moral maladies of man;
 Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies,
 Tho' natives of this coarse penurious soil; 286
 Nor wholly wither there where seraphs sing,
 Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd, in heav'n:
 Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same
 In either clime, tho' more illustrious there. 290
 These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,
 Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb,
 And, peradventure, of no fading flow'rs.

Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend?
 " The importance of contemplating the tomb; 293
 " Why men decline it; suicide's foul birth;
 " The various kinds of grief; the faults of age;
 " And death's dread character—invite my song."

And, first, the importance of our end survey'd?
 Friends counsel quick dismissal of our grief: 300
 Mistaken kindness! our hearts heal too soon;
 Are they more kind than He who struck the blow?
 Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,
 And banish peace till nobler guests arrive,
 And bring it back a true and endless peace? 305
 Calamities are friends: as glaring day
 Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight;
 Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts
 Of import high, and light divine to man.

The man how bless'd who, sick of gaudy scenes, 310
 (Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves!)
 Is led by choice to take his fav'rite walk
 Beneath Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
 Unpierc'd by Vanity's fantastic ray;
 To read his monuments, to weigh his dust, 315
 Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!
 Lorenzo! read with me Narcissa's stone;
 (Narcissa was thy fav'rite) let us read
 Her moral stone; few doctors preach so well;
 Few orators so tenderly can touch 320
 The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!
 Apt words can strike; and yet in them we see
 Faint images of what we here enjoy.
 What cause have we to build on length of life?
 Temptations, seize, when fear is laid asleep, 325
 And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,
 Truth, radiant goddess! sallies on my soul;
 And puts Delusion's dusky train to flight;
 Dispels the mist our sultry passions raise;
 From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,
 And shews the real estimate of things,
 Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw;
 Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms;
 Detects temptation in a thousand lies:
 Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves,
 And all they bleed for as the summer's dust
 Driv'n by the whirlwind: lighted by her beams,
 I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
 See things invisible, feel things remote;
 Am present with futurities; think nought
 To man so foreign as the joys possess'd,
 Nought so much his as those beyond the grave.

No folly keeps its colour in her sight;
 Pale worldly Wisdom loses all her charms.
 In pompous promise from her schemes profound,
 If future fate she plans, 'tis all in leaves,
 Like Sybil, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss!
 At the first blast it vanishes in air.
 Not so celestial. Wouldst thou know, Lorenzo!
 How differ worldly wisdom and divine?
 Just as the waning and the waxing moon.
 More empty worldly wisdom ev'ry day,
 And ev'ry day more fair her rival shines.

When later, there's less time to play the fool, 353
 Soon our whole term for wisdom is expir'd,
 (Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave)
 And everlasting fool is writ in fire;
 Or real wisdom wafts us to the skies.

As worldly selfness resemble Sybils' leaves, 360
 The good man's days to Sybil's books compare,
 (In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale)
 In price still rising as in number less,
 Inestimable quite his final hour.

For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones; 365
 Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay,
 "Oh let me die his death!" all Nature cries.

"Then live his life!"—All Nature falters there; 370
 Our great physician daily to consult,
 To commune with the grave our only cure.

What grave prescribes the best?—A friend's, and
 From a friend's grave how soon we disengage
 Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.

Why are friends raviſh'd from us?—tis to blind, 375
 By soft Affection's ties, on human hearts
 The thought of death, which reason, too supine,

Or misemploy'd, so rately fastens there,
 Nor reason nor affection, no, nor both
 Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.

Behold th' inexorable hour at hand! 380
 Behold th' inexorable hour forgot!
 And to forget it the chief aim of life,

Tho' well to ponder it is life's chief end,

Is death; that ever-threat'ning; ne'er remote;

That all-important; and that only sure,

(Come when he will) an unexpected guest;

Nay, tho' invited by the loudest calls

Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still,

Tho' num'rous messengers are sent before,

To warn his great arrival: What the cause

The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill?

All heav'n looks down astonish'd at the sight,

Is it that Life has sown her joys so thick,

We can't thrust in a single care between?

Is it that Life has such a swarm of cares,

The thought of death can't enter for the throng?

Is it that Time stalks on with downy feet,

Nor wakes indulgence from her golden dream?

To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats;

We take the lying sister for the same.

Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,

For ever changing; unperceiv'd the change;

In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice;

To the same life none ever twic' awoke.

We call the brook the same; the same we think

Our life, tho' still more rapid in its flow;

Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,

And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say

(Retaining still the brook to bear us on)

That life is like a vessel on the stream?

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In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
 Of time descend, but not on time intent;
 Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave,
 Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;
 We start, awake, look out: what see we there?
 Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.
 Is this the cause death flies all human thought?
 Or is it judgment, by the Will struck blind,
 That domineering mistress of the soul
 Like him so strong, by Dalilah the fair?
 Or is it fears turns startled Reason back,
 From looking down a precipice so steep?
 'Tis dreadful, and the dread is wisely plac'd
 By Nature, conscious of the make of man.
 A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,
 A flaming sword to guard the tree of Life.
 By that unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour
 The good man would repine; would suffer joys,
 And burn impatient for his promis'd skies.
 The bad, on each punctilious pique of pride,
 Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein,
 Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,
 And mar the scenes of Providence below.
 What groan was that, Lorenzo?—Furies! rise,
 And drown, in your less execrable yell,
 Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,
 On wing impetuous, a black fullen soul,
 Blasted from hell, with horrid lust of death.

Thy friend; the brave, the gallant Altamont; still not
 So call'd, so thought; and then he fled the field; 440
 Less base the fear of death than fear of life.
 O Britain! infamous for suicide!
 An island in thy manners! far disjoin'd
 From the whole world of rationals beside!
 In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head; 445
 Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.

But thou be shock'd while I detect the cause
 Of self-assault, expose the monster's birth;
 And bid Abhorrence hiss it round the world.
 Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun; 450
 The sun is innocent, thy clime absolv'd,
 Immoral crimes kind Nature never made,
 The cause I sing in Eden might prevail,
 And proves it is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man; (let man in homage bow 455
 Who names his soul) a native of the skies!
 High-born and free, her freedom should maintain,
 Unfold, unmortgag'd for earth's little bribes.
 Th' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,
 Like strangers, jealous of her dignity, 460
 Studios of home, and ardent to return,
 Of earth suspicious, earth's enchanted cup
 With cool reserve light touching, should indulge,
 On immortality, her godlike taste; 464
 There take large draughts; make her chief banquet
 But some reject this sustenance divine,

To beggarly vile appetites descend,
 Ask alms of earth for guests that came from heav'n;
 Sink into slaves, and sell, for present hire,
 Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate) 475
 Their native freedom, to the prince who sways
 This nether world: and when his payments fail,
 When his foul basket gorges them no more,
 Or their pall'd palates loath the basket full,
 Are instantly, with wild demonic rage, 479
 For breaking all the chains of Providence,
 And bursting their confinement, thro' fast barr'd
 By laws divine and human, guarded strong
 With horrors doubled to defend the pass,
 The blackest Nature or dire guilt can raise, 485
 And moated round with fathomless destruction,
 Sure to receive and whirl them in their fall.

Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown,
 Or, worse, o'erlook'd, o'erlook'd by magistrates,
 Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed 489
 Is madness, but the madness of the heart.
 And what is that? our utmost bound of guilt.
 A sensual unreflecting life is big
 With monstrous births, and suicide, to crown
 The black infernal brood. The bold to break 495
 Heav'n's law supreme, and desperately rush
 Thro' sacred Nature's murder, on their own,
 Because they never think of death, they die.
 'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,

At once to shun and meditate his end,
 When by the bed of languishment we sit,
 (The seat of Wisdom, if our choice, not fate)
 Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang,
 Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,
 Number their moments, and in ev'ry clock
 Start at the voice of an eternity;
 See the dim lamp of life just feebly light
 An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,
 Then sink again, and quiver into death,
 That most pathetic herald of our own,
 How read we such sad scenes? As sent to man
 In perfect vengeance; no, in pity sent,
 To melt him down, like wax, and then impress
 Indelible, Death's image on his heart,
 Bleeding for others; trembling for himself,
 We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we smile,
 The mind turns fool before the cheek is dry,
 Our quick-returning folly cancels all,
 As the tide rushing razes what is writ
 In yielding sands, and smooths the letter'd shore.
 Lorenzo! hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh?
 Or study'd the philosophy of tears?
 (A science yet unlearn'd in our schools!)
 Hast thou descended deep into the breast,
 And seen their source? if not, descend with me,
 And trace these briny riv'lets to their springs,
 Our fun'ral tears from diff'rent causes rise;

As if from sep'rate cisterns in the soul,
 Of various kinds they flow. From tender hearts,
 By soft contagion call'd; some burst at once,
 And stream obsequious to the leading eye.
 Some ask more time; by curious art distill'd.
 Some hearts, in secret hard; unapt to melt,
 Struck by the magic of the public eye,
 Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out again:
 Some weep to share the fame of the deceas'd,
 So high in merit; and to them so dear:
 They dwell on praises which they think they share,
 And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.
 Some mourn in proof that something they could lose;
 They weep, not to relieve their grief, but show:
 Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,
 As conscious all their love is in arrears.
 Some mischievously weep; not unappris'd.
 Tears sometimes aid the conquest of an eye.
 With what address the soft Ephesians draw
 Their sable network o'er entangled hearts,
 As seen thro' crystal, how their roses glow,
 While liquid pearls mans trickling down their cheek
 Of her's not proper Egypt's wanton queen;
 Carousing gems; herself dissolv'd in love.
 Some weep at death; abstracted from the dead,
 And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.
 By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,
 Because a decent veil conceals their joy.

Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain,
 As deep in indiscretion as in woe.
 Passion, blind passion, impotently pours
 Tears that deserve more tears, while Reason sleeps,
 Or gazes, like an idiot, on concern'd;
 Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm,
 Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.
 Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,
 That noble gift! that privilege of man
 From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy;
 But these are barren of that birth divine;
 They weep impetuous as the summer-storm,
 And full as short, the cruel grief soon tam'd,
 They make a pastime of the stings of tale;
 Far as the deep-refounding knell they spread
 The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more:
 No grain of wisdom pays them for their woe.
 Half-round the globe the tears pump'd up by death
 Are spent in wat'ring vanities of life;
 In making folly flourish still more fair:
 When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,
 Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust,
 Instead of learning there her true support,
 Tho' there thrown down her true support to learn,
 Without Heav'n's aid, impatient to be blest,
 She crawls to the next shrub or bramble-vile,
 Tho' from the stately cedar's arms she fell;
 With stale forest-worn embraces clings anew,

The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,
 In all the fruitless fopperies of life;
 Presents her weed, well-fancy'd, at the ball,
 And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.

So wept Aurelia, till the destin'd youth
 Stept in with his receipt for making smiles,
 And blanching fables into bridal bloom.

So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate,
 Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,
 And dy'd to give him, orphan'd in his birth!

Not such, Narcissa! my distress for thee.

I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb,

To sacrifice to Wisdom:—What wast thou?

“Young, gay, and fortunate!” Each yields a theme:

I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe;

(Heav'n knows I labour with severer still!)

I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.

A soul without reflection, like a pile

Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy youth: what says it to gray hairs?

Narcissa! I'm become thy pupil now.—

Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew,

She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to heav'n!

Time on this head has snow'd, yet still 'tis borne,

Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.

Cover'd with shame I speak it, age severe

Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair;

With graceless gravity chastising youth,

That youth chafis'd surpassing in a fault,
 Father of all, forgetfulness of death;
 As if, like objects, pressing on the sight,
 Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen;
 Or that life's loan time ripen'd into right,
 And men might plead prescription from the grave,
 Deathless, from repetition of reprieve,
 Deathless? far from it! such are dead already;
 Their hearts are bury'd, and the world their grave.

Tell me, some God! my guardian Angel! tell
 What thus insatuates? what enchantment plants
 The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death,
 Already at the door? He knocks; we hear him,
 And yet we will not hear. What mail defends
 Our untouch'd hearts? what miracle turns off
 The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers
 Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd?
 We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs
 Around us falling, wounded oft' ourselves,
 Tho' bleeding with our wounds, immortal still!
 We see Time's furrows on another's brow,
 And Death intrench'd, preparing his assault:
 How few themselves in that just mirror see!
 Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong!
 There death is certain; doubtful here: he must,
 And soon: we may, within an age, expire.
 Tho' gray our heads, our thoughts and aims are green;
 Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent;

Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve. 635
 Absurd Longevity! More, more, it cries:
 More life, more wealth, more trash of ev'ry kind.
 And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails?
 Object and appetite must club for joy:
 Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow, 640
 Bawbles, I mean, that strike us from without,
 While Nature is relaxing ev'ry string!
 Ask Thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.
 Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,
 Has nothing of more manly to succeed? 645
 Contract the taste immortal; learn ev'n now
 To relish what alone subsists hereafter.
 Divine, or none, henceforth, your joys for ever.
 Of age the glory is to wish to die:
 That wish is praise and promise; it applauds 650
 Past life, and promises our future bliss.
 What weakness see not children in their fires!
 Grand-climacterical absurdities!
 Gray-hair'd authority, to faults of youth
 How shocking! it makes folly thrice a fool, 655
 And our first childhood might our last despise.
 Peace and esteem is all that age can hope:
 Nothing but wisdom gives the first; the last
 Nothing but the repute of being wise.
 Folly bars both: our age is quite undone, 660
 What folly can be ranker? like our shadows,
 Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.

No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave. 664
 Our hearts should leave the world before the knell
 Calls for our carcasses to mend the soil. 665
 Enough to live in tempest; die in port:
 Age should fly, and cover in retreat
 Defects of judgment, and the will's subdue;
 Walk thoughtful on the silent solemn shore
 Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon; 670
 And put good works on board, and wait the wind
 That shortly blows us into worlds unknown:
 If unconsider'd, too, a dreadful scene!

All should be prophets to themselves; foresee
 Their future fate; their future fate foretaste: 675
 This art would waste the bitterness of death.
 The thought of death alone the fear destroys:
 A disaffection to that precious thought
 Is more than midnight darkness on the soul,
 Which sleeps beneath it on a precipice, 680
 Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, Lorenzo, why so warmly press,
 By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,
 The thought of death? That thought is the machine,
 The grand machine! that heaves us from the dust, 685
 And rears us into men: That thought, ply'd home,
 Will soon reduce the ghastly precipice
 O'erhanging hell, will soften the descent,
 And gently slope our passage to the grave.
 How warmly to be wish'd! what heart of flesh 690

Would trifle with tremendous; dare extremes?
 Yawn o'er the fate of infinite; what hand,
 Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,
 (To speak a language too well known to thee)
 Would at a moment give its all to Chance,
 And stamp the dye for an eternity?
 Aid me, Narcissa! aid me to keep pace
 With Destiny, and, ere her scissars cut
 My thread of life, to break this tougher thread
 Of moral death, that ties me to the world;
 Sting thou my slumbering reason to send forth
 A thought of observation on the foe;
 To fally, and survey the rapid march
 Of his ten thousand messengers to many
 Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all,
 All accident apart, by Nature sign'd,
 My warrant is gone out, tho' dormant yet;
 Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.
 Must I then forward only look for Death?
 Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.
 Man is a self-survivor every year.
 Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.
 Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey:
 My youth, my noon-tide his; my yesterday:
 The bold invader shares the present hour.
 Each moment on the former shuts the grave,
 While man is growing, life is in decrease,
 And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.

Our birth is nothing but our death begun,
As tapers waste: that instant they take fire. 720

Shall we then fear lest that should come to pass,
Which comes to pass each moment of our lives? (T)
If fear we must, let that death turn us pale,
Which murders strength and ardour; what remains
Should rather call on Death than dread his call. 725
Ye partners of my fault, and my decline,
Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's knell
(Rude visitant!) knocks hard at your dull sense,
And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear,
Be death your theme in every place and hour; 730
Nor longer want, ye monumental Sires,
A brother tomb to tell you you shall die.
That death you dread (so great is Nature's skill!)
Know you shall court before you shall enjoy.

But you are learn'd; in volumes deep you sit, 735
In wisdom shallow. Pompous ignorance!
Would you be still more learned than the learn'd?
Learn well to know how much need not be known;
And what that knowledge which impairs your sense.
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food, 740
Unhedg'd, lies open in life's common field,
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.
You scorn what lies before you in the page
Of Nature and Experience, moral truth;
Of indispensable, eternal fruit, 745
Fruit on which mortals feeding turn to gods;

And dive in science for distinguish'd names,
 Dishonest fomentation of your pride,
 Sinking in virtue as you rise in fame;
 Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords
 Light, but not heat; it leaves you undervout,
 Frozen at heart, while speculation shines;
 Awake, ye curious Indagators! fond
 Of knowing all but what avails you known;
 If you would learn Death's character, attend
 All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,
 All dyes of fortune, and all dates of age,
 Together shook in his impartial urn,
 Come forth at random; or, if choice is made,
 The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults
 All bold conjecture and fond hopes of man.
 What countless multitudes not only leave,
 But deeply disappoint us, by their deaths,
 Tho' great our sorrow, greater our surprise.

Like other tyrants, Death delights to smite
 What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of pow'r
 And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme
 To bid the wretch survive the fortunate;
 The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud;
 And weeping fathers build their children's tomb;
 Me thine, Narcissa!—What tho' short thy date?
 Virtue, not rolling sons, the mind matures
 That life is long which answers life's great end;
 The time that bears no fruit deserves no name.

The man of wisdom is the man of years.
 In hoary youth Methusalems may die;
 O how misdated on their flattery tombs
 Narcissa's youth has lectur'd me thus far:
 And can her gaiety give counsel too?
 That, like the Jews' fam'd oracle of gems,
 Sparkles instruction; such as throws new light,
 And opens more the character of Death,
 Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! this thy vaunt!
 "Give Death his due, the wretched and the old;
 "Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave;
 "Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,
 "But own man born to live as well as die."
 Wretched and old thou giv'st him; young and gay
 He takes; and plunder is a tyrant's joy,
 What if I prove, "the farthest from the fear
 "Are often nearest to the stroke of fate?
 All more than common menaces an end.
 A blaze betokens brevity of life.
 As if bright embers should emit a flame,
 Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye,
 And made Youth younger, and taught Life to live.
 As Nature's opposites wage endless war,
 For this offence, as treason to the deep
 Inviolable stupor of his reign,
 Where lust and turbulent ambition sleep,
 Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,
 More life is still more odious; and, reduc'd

By conquest, aggrandizes more his pow'r.
 But wherefore aggrandiz'd? By Heav'n's decree
 To plant the soul on her eternal guard,
 In awful expectation of our end.
 Thus runs Death's dread commission; "Strike, but so
 " As most alarms the living by the dead!"
 Hence stratagem delights him; and surprise,
 And cruel sport with man's securities.
 Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;
 And where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs most.
 This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep?
 Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up
 In deep Dissimulation's darkest night.
 Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,
 Who travel under cover, Death assumes
 The name and look of Life, and dwells among us:
 He takes all shapes that serve his black designs;
 Tho' master of a wider empire far
 Than that o'er which the Roman Eagle flew,
 Like Nero, he's a fiddler, charioteer;
 Or drives his phaeton in female guise;
 Quite unsuspected, till the wheel beneath
 His disarray'd oblation he devours.
 He most affects the forms least like himself,
 His slender self: hence burly corpulence
 Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.
 Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,

Or ambush in a smile; or, wanton, dive
 In dimples deep: Love's eddies, which draw in
 Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair:
 Such on Narcissa's couch he loiter'd long
 Unknown, and when detected, still was seen
 To smile: such peace has innocence in death.

Most happy they! whom least his arts deceive.
 One eye on death, and one full fix'd on heav'n,
 Becomes a mortal and immortal man.
 Long on his wiles a piqu'd and jealous spy,
 I've seen, or dream'd I saw, the tyrant dress
 Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles:
 Say, Muse! for thou remember'st, call it back,
 And shew Lorenzo the surprising scene;
 If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain.

'Twas in a circle of the gay I stood:
 Death would have enter'd; Nature push'd him back:
 Supported by a doctor of renown,
 His point he gain'd; then artfully dismiss'd
 The sage; for Death design'd to be conceal'd:
 He gave an old, vivacious usurer
 His meagre aspect, and his naked bones,
 In gratitude for plumping up his prey.
 A pamper'd spendthrift, whose fantastic air,
 Well-fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow,
 He took in change, and underneath the pride
 Of costly linen tuck'd his filthy shroud.
 His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane.

And hid his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equip'd,

Out-sallies on adventures. Ask you where?

Where is he not? For his peculiar haunts

Let this suffice; sure as night follows day,

Death treads in Pleasure's footsteps round the world,

When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason shuns.

When against Reason Riot shuts the door,

And gaiety supplies the place of sense,

Then, foremost at the banquet and the ball,

Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly dye,

Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to drown.

Gaily carousing to his gay companions,

Only he laughs to see them laugh at him,

As absent far; and when the revel burns,

When Fear is banish'd, and triumphant Thought,

Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,

Against him turns the key, and bids him sup

With their progenitors—he drops his mask,

Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,

From his black mask of nitre, touch'd by fire,

He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.

And is not this triumphant treachery,

And more than simple conquest, in the end?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul

In soft security, because unknown

Which moment is commission'd to destroy?

In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.
 Is death uncertain? therefore thou be fix'd,
 Fix'd as a centinel, all eye, all ear,
 All expectation of the coming foe.
 Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,
 Lest Slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,
 And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong;
 Thus give each day the merit and renown
 Of dying well, tho' doom'd but once to die:
 Nor let life's period, hidden, (as from most)
 Hide, too, from thee the precious use of life.

Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate:
 Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid:
 Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,
 Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die.
 Tho' Fortune, too, (our third and final theme)
 As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,
 And ev'ry glitt'ring gewgaw, on her sight,
 To dazzle and debauch it from its mark.
 Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,
 And ev'ry thought that misses it is blind:
 Fortune with Youth and Gaiety conspir'd
 To weave a triple wreath of happiness,
 (If happiness on earth) to crown her brow:
 And could Death charge thro' such a shining shield?

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear,
 As if to damp our elevated aims,
 And strongly preach humility to man.

O how portentous is prosperity!
 How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines!
 Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition;
 To cull his victims from the fairest fold,
 And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life;
 When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er
 With recent honours, bloom'd with ev'ry bliss,
 Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
 The gaudy centre, of the public eye;
 When Fortune, thus, has told her child in his,
 Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state,
 How often have I seen him dropt at once,
 One morning's envy! and our ev'ning's sigh!
 As if her bounties were the signal given,
 The show'ry wreath, to mark the sacrifice,
 And call Death's arrows on the doltin'd prey.
 High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate,
 All you for what? to give his war on man
 The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;
 Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe,
 And burn Lorenzo still for the sublime
 Of life! to hang his airy nest on high,
 On the slight timber of the topmoss bough,
 Rock'd at each breeze, and menacing a fall!
 Granting grim Death at equal distance there,
 Yet peace begins just where ambition ends.
 What makes man wretched? happiness deny'd?
 Lorenzo! no; 'tis happiness disdain'd:

She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile,
 And calls herself Content, a homely name!
 Our flame is transport; and content our scorn, 945
 Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,
 And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead;
 A tempest to warm transport near of kin,
 Unknowing what our mortal state admits,
 Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise,
 And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace;
 Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious Youth!
 Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate!
 As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up
 Thy wholesome fears, now, drawn in contrast, see
 Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand,
 See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs,
 Unlocks her casket, spreads her glitt'ring ware,
 And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad, 960
 Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.
 All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends,
 Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,
 Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,
 (Still more ador'd) to snatch the golden show'r, 965

Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more,
 As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.
 O what a precious pack of votaries,
 Unkennell'd from the prisons and the stews,
 Pour in, all op'ning in their idol's praise! 970

All, attend, eye each wafture of her hand, Whirl'd on W
 And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws, Research d
 Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd, if turn'd i
 Untasted, thro' mad appetite for more, The number
 Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still: 975
 Sagacious all to trace the smallest game, One curb an
 And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!) IIA
 Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they launch, they fly,
 O'er just, o'er facted, all forbidden ground, I bnd
 Drunk with the burning scent of place or pow'r, 980
 Staunch to the foot of Lucre till they die. d m buA
 Or if for men you take them, as I mark And m m buA
 Their manners, though their various fates survey, I bnd
 With aim mismanag'd, and impetuous speed, Wold A
 Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off, 985
 Thro' fury to possess it; some succeed, As when dnd W
 But stumble, and let fall the taken prize, Which ndnd W
 From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away, d T
 And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain. By
 To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off, b 990
 Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound. ad mnd al
 Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad, The eed
 Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread. buA
 Together some (unhappy rivals!) seize, The dnd T
 And rend abundance into poverty; Galloo I blu 995
 Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles; up A
 Smiles, too, the goddess; but smiles most at those Q
 (Just victims of exorbitant desire!) of d blue coe 2)

Who perish at their own request, and; whom'd
 Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.
 Fortune is famous for her numbers slain;
 The number small which happiness can bear.
 Tho' various for a while their fates, at last
 One curse involves them all: at Death's approach
 All read their riches backward into loss,
 And mourn in just proportion to their store.

And Death's approach (if orthodox my song)
 Is hasten'd by the lure of Fortune's smiles.
 And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?
 And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin?
 Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow,
 A blow, which, while it executes, alarms,
 And startles thousands with a signal fall.
 As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,
 Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade,
 The sun's defiance, and the flock's defence,
 By the strong strokes of lab'ring blinds subdu'd,
 Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height,
 In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground;
 The conscious forest trembles at the shock,
 And hill, and stream, and distant dale, resounds.

These high-aim'd darts of Death, and these alone,
 Should I collect, my quiver would be full;
 A quiver which, suspended in mid air,
 Or near heav'n's archer, in the zodiac hung,
 (So could it be) should draw the public eye,

The gaze and contemplation of mankind
 A constellation awful, yet benign,
 To guide the gay thro' life's tempestuous wave,
 Nor suffer them to strike the common rock; 1039

“From greater danger to grow more secure,
 “And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate.”

Lyfander, happy past the common lot,
 Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear;
 He woo'd the fair Aspatia; she was kind.
 In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were bless'd:
 All who knew envy'd; yet in envy lov'd;
 Can Fancy form more finish'd happiness;
 Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome
 Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires
 Float in the wave, and break against the shore;
 So break those glitt'ring shadows, human joys.

The faithless morning smil'd: he takes his leave
 To re-embrace, in ecstasies, at eve:

The rising storm forbids: the news arrives;
 Untold she saw it in her servant's eye.

She felt it seen, (her heart was apt to feel)
 And drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,
 In suffocating sorrows shares his tomb.

Now round the sumptuous bridal monument 1050

The guilty billows innocently roar,
 And the rough sailor passing, drops a tear.

A tear?—can tears suffice?—but not for me.
 How vain our efforts! and our arts how vain!

The distant train of thought I took; to hum; **1055**
 Has thrown me on my fate:—These dy'd together;
 Happy in ruin! undivore'd by death;
 Or ne'er to meet; or ne'er to part, is peace.
 Narcissa! Pity bleeds at thought of thee;
 Yet thou wast only near me, not myself. **1060**
 Survive myself;—that cures all other woe.
 Narcissa lives! Philander is forgot.
 O the soft downy cheek! O the tender eyes,
 Close twisted with the fibres of the heart!
 Which, broken, break them, and drain off the soul
 Of human joy;—and make it pain to live.
 And is it then to live? When such friends part
 'Tis the sweetest death. My Heart! no more. **1065**

End of Night Fifth.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VI.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

IN TWO PARTS.

Containing the

Nature, Proof, and Importance, of Immortality.

PART I.

Where, among other things,

Glory and Riches are particularly considered.

Humbly inscribed to the

RIGHT HON. HENRY PELHAM,

*First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the
Exchequer.*

PREFACE.

FEW *ages have been deeper in dispute about religion than
this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it,
seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute
the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question,
Is man immortal, or is he not? If he is not, all our dis-
putes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case,
truth, reason, religion, which give our discourses such
pompe and solemnity, are (as will be shewn) mere empty
sounds, without any meaning in them: but if man is im-
mortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eter-*

nal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablished, or unawakened in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity, how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it. Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest that souls should not survive! The Heathen world confessed that they rather hoped, than firmly believed, immortality! and how many Heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred Page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the Gospel; but by how many is the Gospel rejected or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded that most, if not all our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom: and I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality are not far from being Christians: for it is hard to conceive that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly and impartially inquire after the

surest means of escaping one, and securing the other : and of such an earnest and impartial inquiry, I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered ; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers ; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible, and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms ; and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall here occur which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments, in this, of all points, the most important : for as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed ; but it is undisputed for this reason only, viz. because where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be undisputable : and, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

SHE • (for I know not yet her name in heaven)
Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene,
Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail ?
This seeming mitigation but inflames ;
This fancy'd med'cine heightens the disease.

* Referring to Night the Fifth.

The longer known, the closer still she grew,
 And gradual parting is a gradual death.
 'Tis the grim tyrant's engine which extorts,
 By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,
 From hardest hearts confession of distress, 10
 O the long dark approach, thro' years of pain,
 Death's gall'ry! (might I dare to call it so)
 With dismal doubt and sable terror hung,
 Sick Hope's pale lamp its only glimm'ring ray:
 There Fate my melancholy walk ordain'd, 15
 Forbid Self-love itself to flatter there.
 How oft' I gaz'd, prophetically sad!
 How oft' I saw her dead, while yet in smiles!
 In smiles she sunk her grief to lessen mine:
 She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain. 20
 Like pow'rful armies trenching at a town,
 By slow and silent, but resistless, sap,
 In his pale progress gently gaining ground,
 Death urg'd his deadly siege; in spite of art,
 Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends 25
 To succour frail humanity. Ye Stars!
 (Not now first made familiar to my sight)
 And thou, O Moon! bear witness; many a night
 He tore the pillow from beneath my head,
 Ty'd down my sore attention to the shock, 30
 By ceaseless depredations on a life
 Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post
 Of observation! darker ev'ry hour!

Less dread the day that drove me to the brink;
And pointed at eternity below;
When my soul shudder'd at futurity;
When, on a moment's point, the important dye
Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell;
And turn'd up life, my title to more woe.

But why more woe? more comfort let it be,
Nothing is dead but that which wish'd to die;
Nothing is dead but wretchedness and pain;
Nothing is dead but what incumber'd, gall'd,
Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from real life.
Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wise?
Too dark the sun to see it; highest stars
Too low to reach it; Death, great Death alone,
O'er stars and sun triumphant, lands us there.

Nor dreadful our transition, tho' the mind,
An artist at creating self-alarms,
Rich in expedients for inquietude,
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take
Death's portrait true? the tyrant never sat.
Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all;
Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.
Death and his image rising in the brain
Bear faint resemblance; never are alike.
Fear shakes the pencil; Fancy loves excess;
Dark Ignorance is lavish of her shades;
And these the formidable picture draw.

But grant the worst, 'tis past; new prospects rise.

And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.
 Far other views our contemplation claim,
 Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;
 Views that suspend our agonies in death.
 Wrapt in the thought of immortality,
 Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought!
 Long life might lapse, age unperceiv'd come on,
 And find the soul unalied with her theme.
 Its Nature, Proof, Importance, fire my song.
 O that my song could emulate my soul!
 Like her immortal, No! the soul disdains
 A mark so mean; far nobler hope inflames,
 If endless ages can outweigh an hour,
 Let not the laurel, but the palm, inspire.

Thy nature, Immortality! who knows?
 And yet who knows it not? It is but life
 In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,
 And spun for ever; dyed by cruel Fate
 In Stygian dye; now black, now brittle; here!
 How short our correspondence with the sun!
 And while it lasts inglorious! our best deeds
 How wanting in their weight! our highest joys
 Small cordials to support us in our pain,
 And give us strength to suffer. But how great
 To mingle interests, converse, amities,
 With all the sons of Reason, scatter'd wide
 Thro' habitable space, wherever borne,
 Howe'er undow'd! to live free citizens

Of universal Nature! to lay hold
 By more than feeble faith, on the Supreme!
 To call heav'n's rich unfathomable mines
 (Mines which support archangels in their state)
 Our own! to rise in science as in bliss,
 Initiate in the secrets of the skies!
 To read creation; read its mighty plan
 In the bare bosom of the Deity!
 The plan and execution to collate
 To see, before each glance of piercing thought,
 All cloud, all shadow, blown remote, and leave
 No mystery—but that of love divine,
 Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing
 From earth's aceldama, this field of blood,
 Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,
 From darkness and from dust, to such a scene!
 Love's element! true joy's illustrious home!
 From earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair!
 What exquisite vicissitude of fate!
 Blest'd abolition of our blackest hour!

Lorenzo! these are thoughts that make man man,
 The wise illumine, aggrandize the great
 How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,
 And ev'ry moment fear to sink beneath
 The clod we tread, soon trodden by our sons)
 How great, in the wild whirl of time's pursuits,
 To stop, and pause; involv'd in high presage,
 Thro' the long vista of a thousand years,

To stand contemplating our distant selves;
 As in a magnifying mirror seen,
 Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine!
 To prophesy our own futurities;
 To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends!
 To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys
 As far beyond conception as desert,
 Ourselves th' astonish'd talkers and the tale! 125

Lorenzo! swells thy bosom at the thought?
 The swell becomes thee: 'tis an honest pride.
 Revere thyself, and yet thyself despise.
 His nature no man can o'er-rate, and none
 Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed,
 Nor there be modest where thou shouldst be proud;
 That almost universal error shuns.
 How just our pride, when we behold those heights!
 Not those ambition-paints in air, but those
 Reason points out, and ardent Virtue gains,
 And angels emulate. Our pride how just!
 When mount we when these shackles cast? when quit
 This cell of the creation? this small nest,
 Stuck in a corner of the universe,
 Wrapt up in fleecy cloud and fine-spun air?
 Fine-spun to sense, but gross and seculent
 To souls celestial; souls ordain'd to breathe
 Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky;
 Greatly triumphant on Time's farther shore,
 Where Virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears, 145

While Pomp imperial begs, an aim of Peace;
In empire high, or in proud science deep,
Ye born of Earth! on what can you confer,
With half the dignity, with half the gain,
The gust, the glow, of rational delight,
As on this theme, which angels praise and share?
Man's fate and favours are a theme in heav'n above!

What wretched repetition cloy's us here!
What periodic potions for the sick!
Distemper'd bodies! and distemper'd minds!
In an eternity what scenes shall strike!
Adventures thicken! novelties surprise!
What webs of wonder shall unravel there!
What full day pour on all the paths of heav'n,
And light th' Almighty's footsteps in the deep!
How shall the blessed day of our discharge
Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of Fate,
And straighten its inextricable maze!

If inextinguishable thirst in man
To know, how rich, how full, our banquet there!
There, not the moral world alone unfolds;
The world material, lately seen in shades,
And in those shades by fragments only seen,
And seen those fragments by the lab'ring eye,
Unbroken, then, illustrious, and entire,
Its ample sphere, its universal frame,
In full dimensions, swells to the survey,
And enters, at one glance, the ravish'd sight,

From some superior point, (where who can tell?
 Suffice it 'tis a point where gods reside)
 How shall the stranger man's illumin'd eye,
 In the vast ocean of unbounded space,
 Behold an infinite of floating worlds,
 Divide the crystal waves of ether pure,
 In endless voyage without port? The least
 Of these disseminated orbs how great!
 Great as they are; what numbers these surpass,
 Huge as leviathan to that small race,
 Those twinkling multitudes of little life;
 He swallows unperceiv'd! Stupendous these?
 Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?
 As particles, as atoms ill-perceiv'd;
 As circulating globules in our veins;
 So vast the plan! Fecundity divine!
 Exub'rant Source! perhaps I wrong thee still

If admiration is a source of joy,
 What transport hence! yet this the least in heav'n.
 What this to that illustrious robe He wears,
 Who toss'd this mass of wonders from his hand,
 A specimen, an earnest, of his power?
 'Tis to that glory, whence all glory flows,
 As the mead's meanest flow'ret to the sun,
 Which gave it birth. But what this sun of heav'n?
 This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?
 Death, only death, the question can resolve.
 By death cheap bought th' ideas of our joy;

The bare ideas! solid happiness
So distant from its shadow chas'd below!

And chase we still the phantom thro' the fire,
O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?

And toil we still for sabbinary pay?
Defy the dangers of the field and flood,

Or, spider-like, spin out our precious silk,
Our more than vital spin, (if not to gain

To great futurity) in curious webs
Of subtle thought and exquisite design

(Fine network of the brain!) to catch a fly—
The momentary buzz of vain renown!

A name! a mortal immortality!
Or (meaner still!) instead of gins and snares

For sordid hire-plunge we in the mire,
Drudge, sweat, thro' ev'ry shame, for ev'ry gain,

For vile contaminating trash, throw up
Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man,

And deify the dirt mix'd to gold—
Ambition, Avarice, the two diamonds these.

Which goad thro' ev'ry thought our human herd,
Hard-travell'd from the cradle to the grave.

How low the wretches stoop! how steep the climb!
These diamonds burn mankind, but most possess

Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the sick.
Is it in time to hide eternity?

And why not in an atom on the shore
To cover ocean? or a mote the sun?

Lorenzo great, and quick him from the throng!

Glory and wealth ! have they this blinding pow'r ? 230
 What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind ?
 Would it surprise thee ? be thou then surpris'd ;
 Thou neither know'st : their nature learn from me.

Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,
 What close connexion ties them to my theme. 235
 First, what is true ambition ? The pursuit
 Of glory nothing less than man can share.
 Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,
 As statulent with fumes of self-applause,
 Their arts and conquests animals might boast, 240
 And claim their laurel crowns as well as we,
 But not celestial. Here we stand alone,
 As in our form, distinct, pre-eminent :
 If prone in thought, our stature is our shame,
 And man should blush his forehead meets the skies.
 The visible and present are for brutes ; 246
 A slender portion, and a narrow bound !
 These reason, with an energy divine,
 O'erleaps, and claims the future and unseen
 The vast unseen ! the future fathomless ! 250
 When the great soul buoys up to this high point,
 Leaving gross Nature's sediments below,
 Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits
 The sage and hero of the fields and woods,
 Asserts his rank, and rises into man. 255
 This is ambition ; this is human fire.
 Can parts or place (two bold pretenders !), make
 Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng ?

Genius and art, ambition's boasted wings,
Our boast but ill deserve: a feeble aid! 260
Dedalian engin'ry! If these alone
Assist our flight, Fame's flight is Glory's fall.
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high;
Our height is but the gibbet of our name.

A celebrated wretch when I behold, 265
When I behold a genius bright and base,
Of tow'ring talents and terrestrial aims,
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,
With rubbish mix'd, and glitt'ring in the dust: 270
Struck at the splendid melancholy sight,
At once compassion soft, and envy, rise—

But wherefore envy? talents angel-bright,
If wanting worth, are shining instruments
In false Ambition's hand, to finish faults 275
Illustrious, and give Infamy renown.

Great ill is an achievement of great pow'rs.
Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.
Reason the means, affections chuse our end;
Means have no merit, if our end amiss. 280
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain.
What is a Pelham's head to Pelham's heart?
Hearts are proprietors of all applause.
Right ends and means make wisdom. Worldly-wise
Is but half-witted at its highest praise. 285
Let genius, then, despair to make thee great,

Nor flatter station. What is station high?
'Tis a proud mendicant; it boasts and begs;
It begs an alms of homage from the throng,
And off the throng deems its charity.
Monarchs and Ministers are awful names;
Whoever wear them challenge our devoir.
Religion, public order, both exact
External homage and a supple knee,
To beings pompously set up, to serve
The meanest slave: all more is Merit's due,
Her sacred and inviolable right,
Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.
Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth,
Nor ever fail of their allegiance there.
Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,
And vote the mantle into majesty.
Let the small savage boast his silver fur,
His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,
His own, descending fairly from his sire;
Shall man be proud to wear his livery,
And souls in crim'n scorn a soul without?
Can place or lessen us or aggrandize?
Pygmies are pygmies still, tho' perch'd on Alps,
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.
Each man makes his own stature, builds himself.
Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids;
Her monuments shall last when Egypt's fall.
Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?

The cause is lodg'd in immortality;
 Hear, and reflect. Thy bosom burns for pow'r;
 What station charms thee? Will I install thee there;
 'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before?
 Then thou before wast something less than man.
 Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride?
 That treacherous pride betrays thy dignity;
 That pride defames humanity, and calls
 The being mean which staffs of strings can raise;
 That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,
 From blindness bold, and towering to the skies.
 'Tis born of ignorance, which knows not man:
 An angel's second, not his second long.
 A Nero, quitting his imperial throne,
 And courting glory from the tinkling string,
 But faintly shadows an immortal soul,
 With empire's self to pride or rapture wild.
 If nobler motives minister no cure,
 Ev'n vanity forbids thee to be vain.
 High worth is elevated place: 'tis more,
 It makes the post stand candidate for thee;
 Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man;
 Tho' no Exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth;
 And tho' it wears no ribband, 'tis renown;
 Renown that would not quit thee tho' disgrac'd,
 Nor leave thee pendant on a master's smile.
 Other ambition Nature interdicts;
 Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,

By pointing at his origin and end ;
 Milk and a swathe, at first, his whole demand ;
 His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone ; 345
 To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls truly great dart forward on the wing
 Of just ambition, to the grand result,
 The curtain's fall ; there see the buskin'd chief
 Unshod behind this momentary scene, 350
 Reduc'd to his own stature ; low or high,
 As vice or virtue sinks him, or sublimes ;
 And laugh at this fantastic mummery,
 This antic prelude of grotesque events,
 Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray 355
 A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,
 And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice
 To Christian pride ! which had with horror shock'd
 The darkest Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

O thou Most Christian ! enemy to peace ! 360
 Again in arms ? again provoking Fate ?
 That prince, and that alone, is truly great,
 Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheaths ;
 On empire builds what empire far outweighs,
 And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies. 365

Why this so rare ? because forgot of all
 The day of death, that venerable day
 Which sits as judge ; that day which shall pronounce
 On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.
 Lorenzo ! never shut thy thought against it ; 370

Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room,
And give it audience in the cabinet.
That friend consulted, flatteries apart,
Will tell thee fair if thou art great or mean.

To dote on aught may leave us, or be left,
Is that ambition? then let flames descend,
Point to the centre their inverted spires,
And learn humiliation from a soul
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.
Yet these are they the world pronounces wise;
The world, which cancels Nature's right and wrong,
And casts new wisdom: ev'n the grave man lends
His solemn face to countenance the coin.

Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.
This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave
To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,
The most ambitious unambitious, mean,
In triumph mean, and abject on a throne.
Nothing can make it less than mad in man
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,
But reaching him who gave her wings to fly.

When blind Ambition quite mistakes her road,
And downward pores for that which shines above,
Substantial happiness and true renown,
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition! powerful sours of gods and men's lives
 Thy strength in many like length of wing in birds, too
 When disengag'd from earth, with greater ease
 And swifter flight, transports us to the skies
 By toys entangled, or in gaily bound'd
 It turns a curse, it is our chain and scourge,
 In this dark dagon, where confin'd we lie,
 Close-grated by the solid bars of sin,
 All prospect of eternity shut out,
 And but for execution nether set free.

With error in ambition justly charg'd,
 Find we Lorenzo wise in his wealth, who
 What if thy rental I reform, and draw
 An inventory new to set thee right
 Where thy true treasure? Gold says, "Not in me!"
 And, "Not in me," the Diamond. Gold is poor,
 India's insolvent, seek it in thyself;
 Seek in thy naked self, and find it there;
 In being so defended, form'd, and endow'd,
 Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-removing,
 Erect, immortal, rational, divine,
 In senses which impart earth and heav'n;
 Enjoy the various fishes Nature yields;
 Far nobler give the riches they enjoy,
 Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves;
 Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright fire;
 Take in, at once, the landscape of the world,
 At a small inlet, which's gain might close

And half create the wondrous world they see.

Our senses, as our reason, are divine.

But for the magic organ's pow'rful charm,

Earth were a rude uncolour'd chaos still. 430

Objects are but th' occasion, ours th' exploit;

Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,

Which Nature's admirable picture draws,

And beautifies creation's ample dome.

Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake, 435

Man makes the matchless image man admires.

Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,

Superior wonders in himself forgot,

His admiration waste on objects round,

When Heav'n makes him the soul of all he sees? 440

Aburd! not rare! so great, so mean, is man.

What wealth in senses such as these! what wealth

In fancy, fir'd to form a fairer scene

Than sense surveys! in Mem'ry's firm record,

Which, should it perish, could this world recall, 445

From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!

In colours fresh, originally bright,

Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!

What wealth in intellect, that sov'reign pow'r!

Which sense and fancy summons to the bar; 450

Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;

And from the mass those underlings import,

From their materials sifted and refin'd,

And in Truth's balance accurately weigh'd,

Forms art and science, government and law;
 The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,
 The vitals, and the grace, of civil life;
 And manners (such exception!) set aside;
 Strikes out, with master hands, a copy fair
 Of his ideas, whose indulgent thought
 Long, long, ere Chaos reign'd, plan'd human bliss.

What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range abroad,
 Disdaining limit or from place or time;
 And bear, at once, in thought extensive, clear
 Th' Almighty Flax, and the trumpeter's sound;
 Bold on creation's onward walk, and view
 What was, and is, and more than ever shall be;
 Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,
 Creations new in Fancy's field to rise;
 Souls that can grasp whatever th' Almighty made;
 And wander wild thro' things impossible;
 What wealth in faculties of endless growth,
 In quenchless passions violent to crave,
 In liberty to chide, in pow'r to reach,
 And in duration (how thy riches rise)
 Duration to perpetuate boundless bliss.

Ask you what pow'r resides in feeble man
 That bliss to gain? Is virtue's, then, unknown;
 Virtue! our present peace, our future prize;
 Man's unprecious, natural estate,
 Improveable at will, in virtue lies;
 Its tenure sure, its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap! for what?
 To breed new want, and beggar us the more;
 Then make a richer scramble for the throng;
 Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long,
 Almost by miracle, is stir'd with play,
 Like rubbish from exploding engines thrown;
 Our magazines of parted trifles fly;
 Fly diverse; fly to foreigners, to foes;
 New masters court, and call the former fools;
 (How justly!) for dependence on their toys;
 Wide scatter, first, our playthings, then our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace?
 Learn, and lament thy self-defeated scheme;
 Riches enable to be richer still;
 And richer still what mortal can resist;
 Thus wealth (a cruel taskmaster!) enjoins
 New toils, succeeding toils, unending train;
 And murders peace, which taught it first to shine.
 The poor are half as wretched as the rich,
 Whose proud and painful privilege it is
 At once to bear a double load of woe;
 To feel the stings of envy and of want;
 Outrageous want! both Indies cannot cure.

A competence is vital to content;
 Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease;
 Sick, or incumber'd, is our happiness;
 A competence is all we can enjoy.
 O be content, where Heav'n can give no more!

More, like a flash of water from a lock,
 Quickens our spirit's movement for an hour,
 But soon its force is spent; nor rise our joys
 Above our native temper's common stream.
 Hence disappointment lurks in ev'ry prize,
 As bees in flow'rs, and stings us with success.

The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns,
 Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.
 Much learning shews how little mortals know;
 Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy:
 At best it babies us with endless toys,
 And keeps us children till we drop to dust.
 As monkeys at a mirror stand amaz'd,
 They fail to find what they so plainly see:
 Thus men, in shining riches, see the face
 Of Happiness, nor know it is a shade;
 But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,
 And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want!
 Who lives to Nature rarely can be poor;
 Who lives to fancy never can rich:
 Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,
 In debt to Fortune, trembles at her pow'r:
 The man of reason smiles at her and death.
 O what a patrimony this! a being
 Of such inherent strength and majesty,
 Not worlds possess'd can raise it; worlds destroy'd
 Can't injure; which holds on its glorious course

When think, O Nature! ends: too bliss to mortal
Creation's obsequies. What treasure this! 540
The monarch is a beggar to the man.

O immortal! ages pass, yet nothing gone!
Morn without eve, a race without a goal
Unshorten'd by progression infinite!
Futurity for ever future life! 545
Beginning still, where computation ends!

'Tis the description of a deity!
'Tis the description of the meanest slave!
The meanest slave dares then Lorenzo scorn?
The meanest slave thy lov'd reign glory shares. 550

Proud Youth! fastidious of the lower world!
Man's lawful pride includes humility;
Stoops to the lowen; is too great to find
Inferiors: all immortal brothers all!
Proprietors eternal of thy love. 555

Immortal! what can strike the sense so strong,
As this the soul? it thunders to the thought,

Reason amazes, gratitude o'erwhelms;
No more we lumber on the brink of Fate;
Rous'd at the sound, the exulting soul ascends, 560
And breathes her native air, an air that feeds
Ambitious high, and fans ethereal fires;
Quick-kindle all that is divine within us,
Nor leaves one loitering thought beneath the stars.

Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the name?
Immortal! were but one immortal, how 565

Would others envy! how would thrones adore!
 Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost?
 How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heav'n!
 O vain, vain, vain, all else! eternity! 570
 A glorious and a needful refuge that,
 From vile imprisonment in abject views.
 'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone,
 Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
 The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill; 575
 That only, and that amply, this performs;
 Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;
 Their terror those, and these their lustre lose;
 Eternity depending covers all;
 Eternity depending all achieves; 580
 Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;
 Blends her distinctions; abrogates her powers;
 The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,
 Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,
 Make one promiscuous and neglected heap, 585
 The man beneath; if I may call him man,
 Whom immortality's full force inspires,
 Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought;
 Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,
 By minds quite conscious of their high descent, 590
 Their present province, and their future prize;
 Divinely darting upward every way,
 Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost!
 Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?

If earth's whole orb, by some due-distant eye
Were seen at once, her tow'ring Alps would sink,
And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.
Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,
Is swallow'd in Eternity's vast round.
To that stupendous view, when souls awake,
So large of late, so mountainous to man,
Time's toys subside, and equal all below.

Enthusiastic this? then all are weak
But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height
Some souls have soar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled:
And all may do what has by man been done.
Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,
Boundless, interminable joys can weigh
Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?
What slave unblest'd, who from to-morrow's dawn
Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,
And, thron'd in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!
Her own immense appointments to compute,
Or comprehend her high prerogatives,
In this her dark minority, how toils,
How vainly pants, the human soul divine!
Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy;
What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss?

In spite of all the truths the Muse has sung,
Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revol'd
Are there who wrap the world so close about them,

They see no farther than the clouds, and dance
 On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,
 Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,
 Headlong they plunge, whence ead both dance and song?
 Are there, Lorenzo? is it possible?
 Are there on earth (let me not call them men)
 Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts,
 Unconscious as the mountain of its ore,
 Or rock of its ineffable gem?
 When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these
 Shall know their treasure; treasure then no more.
 Are there (still more amazing!) who resist
 The rising thought? who smother, in its birth,
 The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?
 Who thro' this bosom barrier burst their way,
 And, with revers'd ambition, strive to sink
 Who labour downwards thro' th' opposing powers
 Of instinct, reason, and the world against them,
 To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock
 Of endless night? night darker than the grave's?
 Who fight the proofs of immortality?
 With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,
 Work all their engines, level their black fires,
 To blot from man this attribute divine,
 (Than vital blood far dearer to the wife)
 Blasphemers, and rank Atheists to themselves?
 To contradict them, see all Nature rise!
 What object, what event, the moon beneath,

But argues, or endears, an after-scene?
To reason proves, or weeds it to desire?
All things proclaim it needful; some advance
One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.
A thousand arguments swarm round my pen, 655
From heav'n, and earth, and man. Indulge a few,
By Nature, as her common habit, worn;
So pressing Providence a truth to teach,
Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.

Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys, 660
Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms
Creation, and holds empire far beyond!
Eternity's Inhabitant august!
Of two eternities amazing Lord!
One past ere man's or angel's had begun, 665
Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault
Thy glorious immortality in man;
A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,
Of moment infinite! but relish'd most
By those who love thee most, who most adore. 670

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth
Of thee the Great Immutable, to man
Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;
And he who most consults her is most wise.
Lorenzo! to this heav'nly Delphos haste, 675
And come back all-immortal, all-divine.
Look Nature through, tis revolution all;
All change, no death: day follows night, and night

The dying day : stars rise, and set, and rise :
 Earth takes the example : See, the Summer gay, 680
 With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
 Droops into pallid Autumn : Winter gray,
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
 Blows Autumn, and his golden-fruits, away,
 Then melts into the spring : soft Spring, with breath
 Favonian, from warm chambers of the south, 686
 Recalls the first. All, to flourish, fades :
 As in a wheel, all sinks to reascend :
 Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just, 690
 Nature revolves, but man advances : both
 Eternal : that a circle, this a line :
 That gravitates, this soars. Th' aspiring soul,
 Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends,
 Zeal and humility her wings, to heav'n. 695
 The world of matter, with its various forms,
 All dies into new life. Life born from death
 Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
 No single atom, once in being, lost,
 With change of counsel charges the Most High. 700

What hence infers Lorenzo ? can it be ?
 Matter immortal ? and shall spirit die ?
 Above the nobler shall less noble rise ?
 Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
 No resurrection know ? shall man alone, 705
 Imperial man ! be sown in barren ground,

Less privileg'd than grain on which he feeds; but
 Is man, in whom alone is pow'r to prize
 The bliss of being, or, with previous pain,
 Deplore its period, by the spleen of Fate;
 Severely doom'd Death's single unredeem'd
 If Nature's revolution speaks aloud
 In her gradation, hear her louder still
 Look Nature through, 'tis neat gradation all
 By what minute degrees her scale ascends
 Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,
 To that above it join'd, to that beneath
 Parts into parts reciprocally shot,
 Abhor divorce: What love of union reigns
 Here dormant matter waits a call to life;
 Half-life, half-death, join there: here life and sense;
 There sense from reason steals a glimm'ring ray:
 Reason shines out in man: But how preserv'd
 The chain unbroken upward, to the realms
 Of incorporeal life & those realms of bliss
 Where Death hath no dominion? Grant a make
 Half-mortal, half-immortal; earthy part,
 And part ethereal: grant the soul of man
 Eternal, or in man the series ends.
 Wide yawns the gap; connexion is no more;
 Check'd Reason halts; her next step wants support;
 Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme
 A scheme Analogy pronounc'd so true;
 Analogy! man's surest guide below.

Thus far all Nature calls on thy belief; 936
 And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,
 False attestation on all Nature charge,
 Rather than violate his league with Death?
 Renounce his reason, rather than renounce
 The dust belov'd, and run the risk of heav'n?
 O what indignity to deathless souls!
 What treason to the majesty of man!
 Of man immortal! Hear the lofty style:
 "If so decreed, th' Almighty will be done.
 "Let earth dissolve, yon' pond'rous orbs descend,
 "And grind us into dust. The soul is safe;
 "The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,
 "As tow'ring flame from Nature's fun'ral pyre;
 "O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;
 "His charter, his inviolable rights,
 "Well-pleas'd to learn from Thunder's impotence,
 "Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms."
 But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo!
 The glories of the world thy sev'nfold shield.
 Other ambition than of crowns in air,
 And superlunary felicities,
 Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can,
 And turn those glories that inchant against thee.
 What ties thee to this life proclaims the next.
 If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.
 Come, my Ambitious! let us mount together,
 (To mount Lorenzo never can refuse)
 And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,

Look down on earth.—What seest thou? wondrous
Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies. [things!
What lengths of labour'd lands! what loaded seas! 766
Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war!
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.
Nor can th' eternal rocks his will withstand: 770
What levell'd mountains! and what lifted vales!
O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,
And gild our landscape with their glitt'ring spires.
Some 'mid the wond'ring waves majestic rise,
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms. 775
Far greater still! (what cannot mortal might?)
See wide dominions ravish'd from the deep!
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams
Or southward turn, to delicate and grand,
The finer arts there ripen in the sun. 780
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,
Ascend the skies! the proud triumphal arch
Shews us half heav'n beneath its ample bend.
High thro' mid air, here streams are taught to flow;
Whole rivers there, laid by in basons, sleep. 785
Here plains turn oceans; there vast oceans join
Thro' kingdoms channell'd deep from shore to shore,
And chang'd creation takes its face from man;
Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,
Where fame and empire wait upon the sword? 790
See fields in blood; hear naval thunders rise;
Britannia's voice! that awes the world to peace.

How yon' enormous mole projecting breaks
 The mid-sea, furious waves! their roar amidst
 Out-speaks the Deity, and says, "O Main!
 " Thus far, nor farther; new restraints obey.
 Earth's disembowel'd! measur'd are the skies!
 Stars are detected in their deep recess!
 Creation widens! vanquish'd Nature yields!
 Her secrets are extorted! art prevails!
 What monument of genius, spirit, power!

And now, Lorenzo! raptur'd at this scene,
 Whose glories render heav'n superfluous! say,
 Whose footsteps these?—Immortals have been here;
 Could less than souls immortal this have done?
 Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal;
 And proofs of immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand soible, I confess
 These are Ambition's works; and these are great:
 But this, the least immortal souls can do,
 Transcend them all.—But what can these transcend?
 Dost ask me what?—one sigh for the distressed
 What then for Infidels? a deeper sigh.
 'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man;
 How little they who think aught great below!
 All our ambitious death defeats but one,
 And that it crowns.—Here cease we; but ere long,
 More pow'ful proof shall take the field against thee,
 Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.

End of Night Sixth.

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